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STRUCTURAL METALLIC MATERIALS BY INFILTRATION

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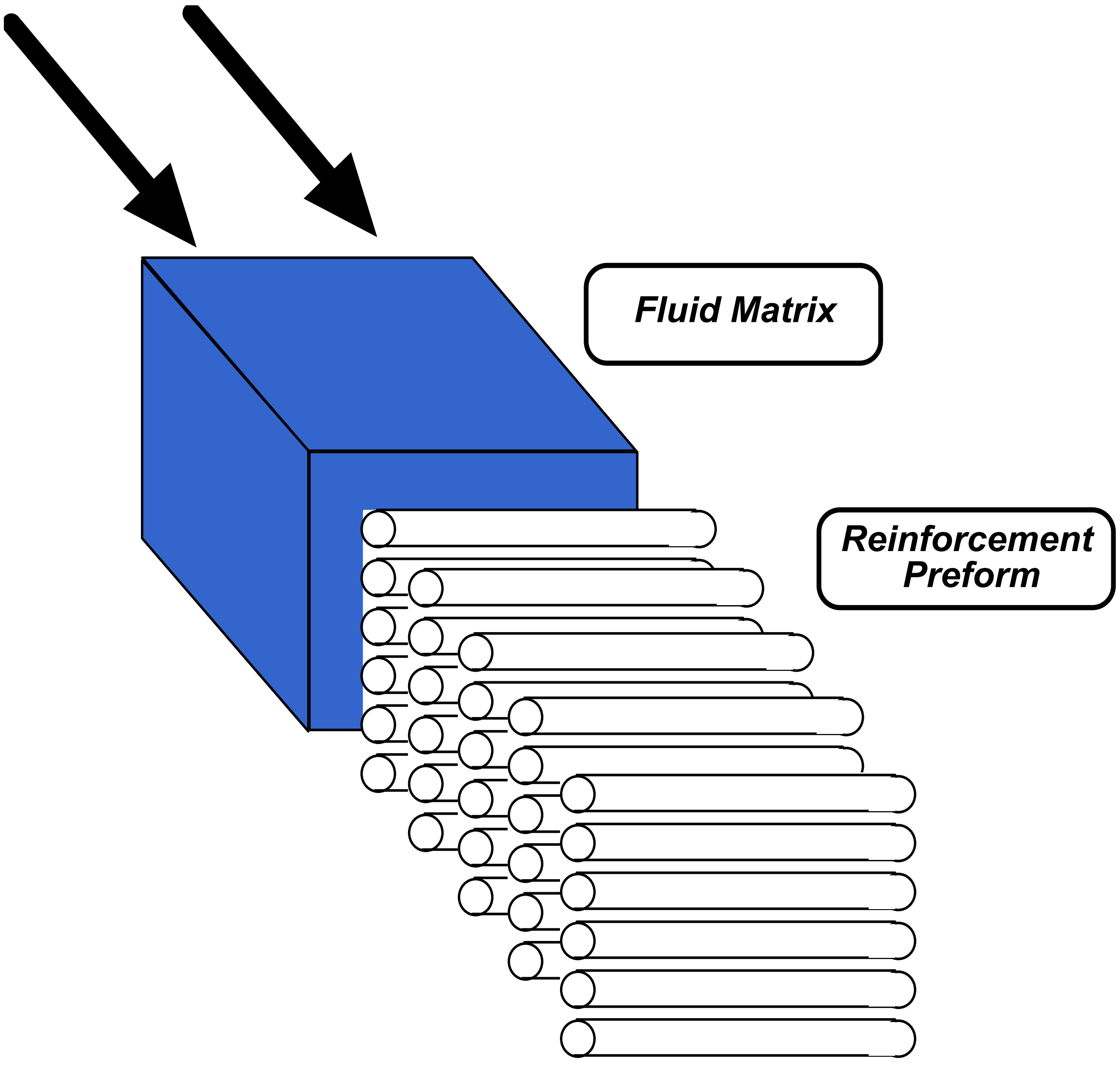
Infiltration

The Infiltration Process



The Infiltration Process

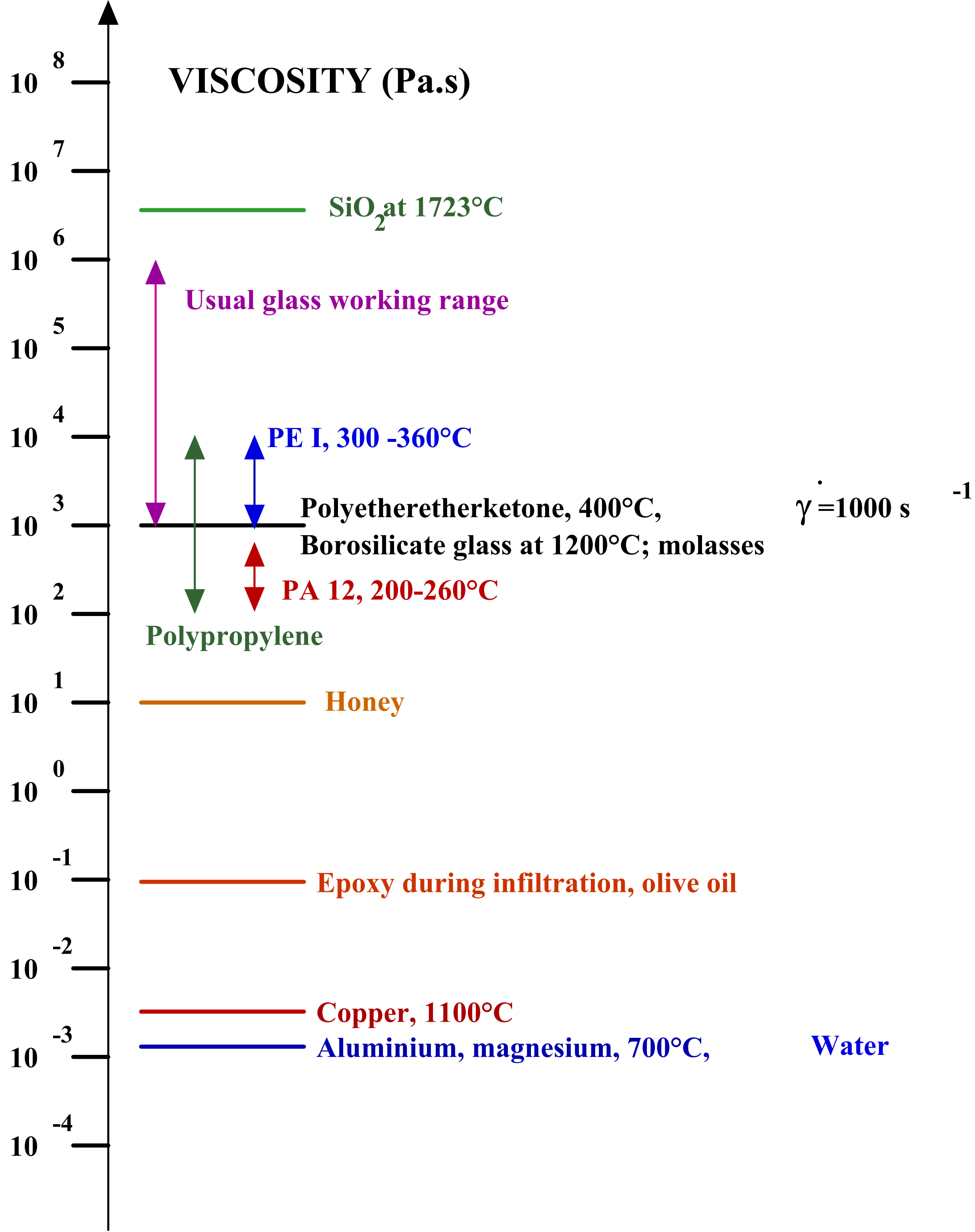
General Characteristics for metals:

- high capillary forces

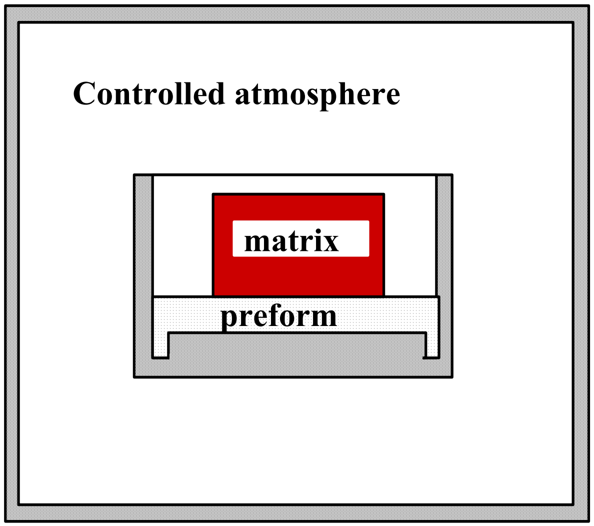
Material	Temperature (°C)	Surface Tension (N/m)
Polypropylene (PP)	180	0.0208
Polyethylene (PE)	180	0.0265
Polyethylene oxide (PEO)	180	0.0307
Nylon 6.6	270	0.0303
PE I	220	0.0357
PA 12	-	0.039
Epoxy, unreacted	-	0.03 to 0.04
Ethanol	20	0.022
Water	20	0.073
SiO_2	1800	0.31
Na_2SiO_3	1088	0.30
Al_2O_3	2050	0.63
$CaSiO_3$	1540	0.35
Al	700	0.87
Cu	1120	1.2
Ti	1670	1.53
Ag	970	0.92
Au	1070	1.13

The Infiltration Process

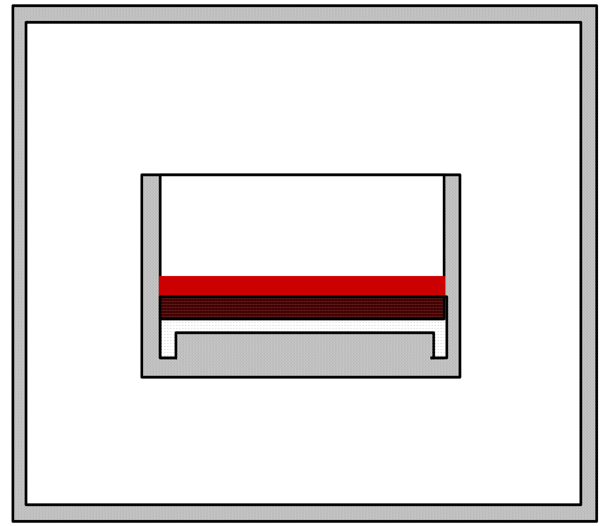
General Characteristics for metals:
- high capillary forces
- low viscosity



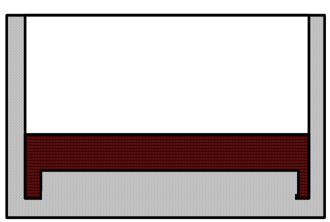
The Infiltration Process: Spontaneous Infiltration



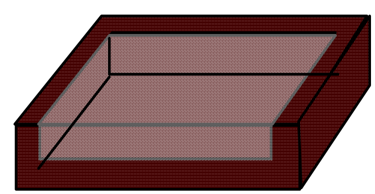
Place preform and metal in a furnace



Infiltration proceeds

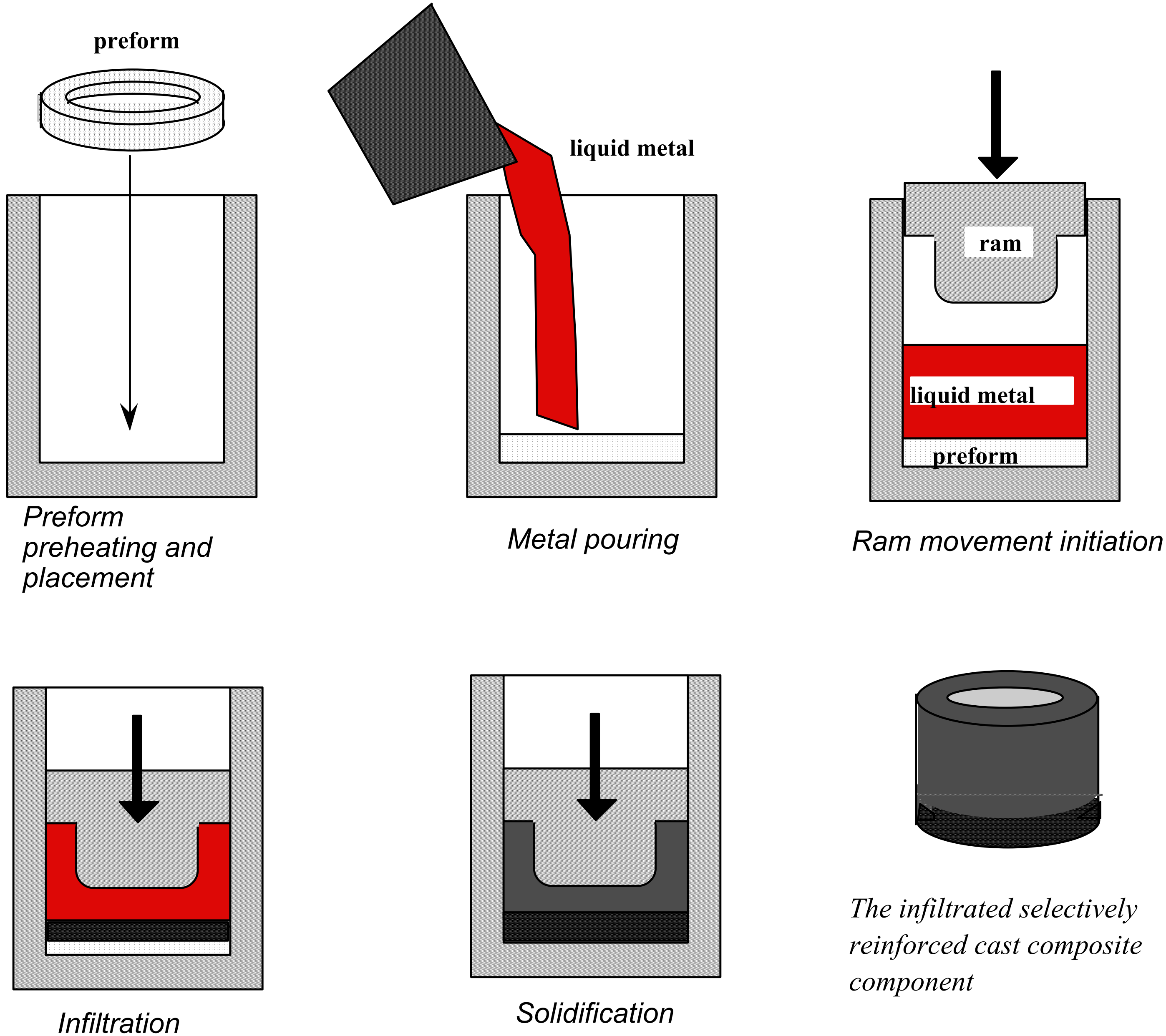


Composite is solidified

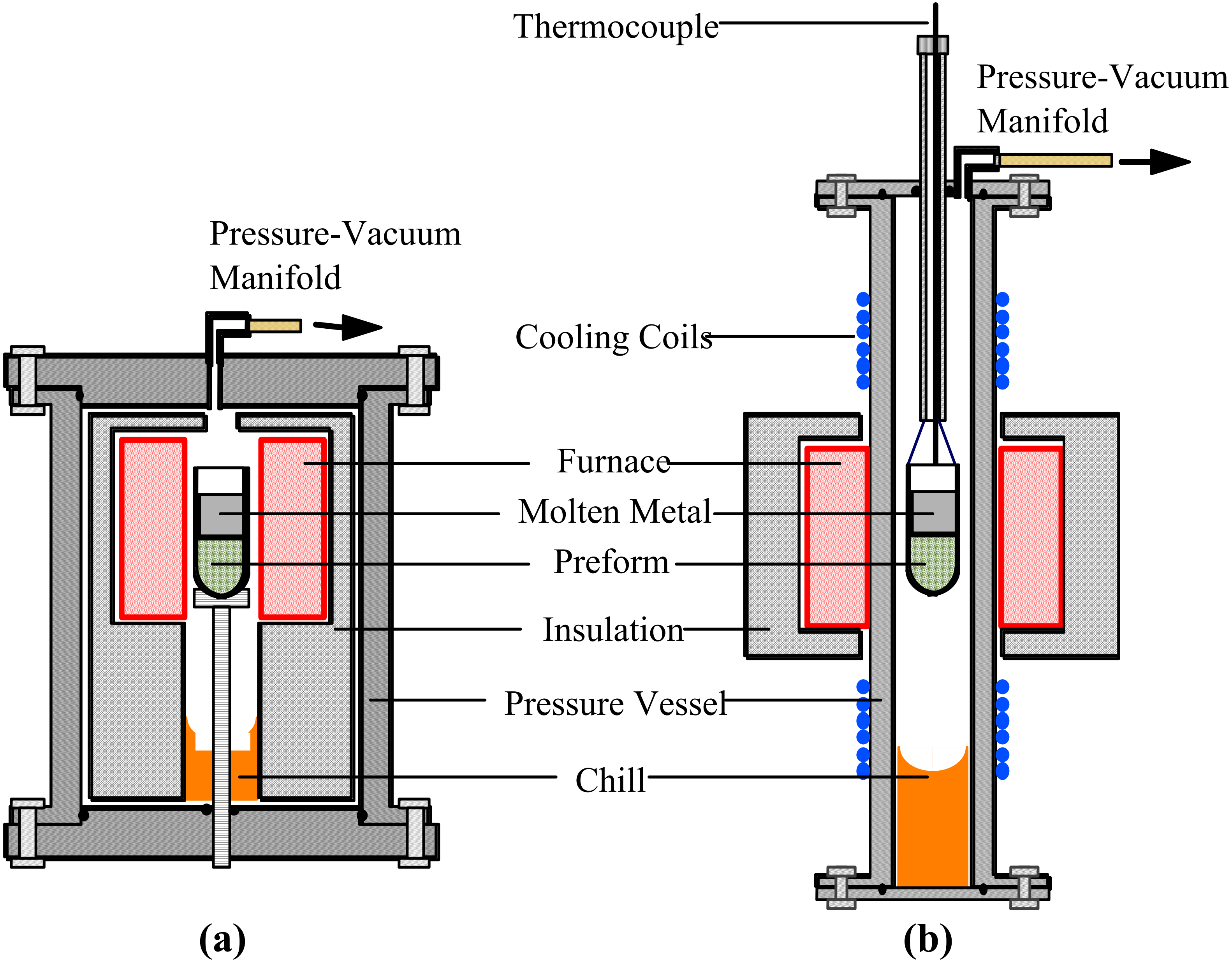


The infiltrated composite

The Infiltration Process: Squeeze Casting



The Infiltration Process: Pressure Infiltration



The infiltration Process

IN GENERAL

- Net-shape, rapid.
- Produces defect-free material if well engineered...
- ...with considerable flexibility in the material choice if pressure is used to drive the metal.
- Hence, well suited for the production of model multiphase materials.

50% ceramic

in

50% metal

A few good reasons to add ceramic to a metal or an alloy

A few good reasons to add ceramic to a metal or an alloy

- Increase wear and abrasion resistance;

- Increase the specific elastic modulus (E/ρ) above 26 $MJ \cdot kg^{-1}$;

- Tailor certain physical properties: thermal conductivity, coefficient of thermal expansion, …

- Increase the tensile strength (with ceramic fibers)

A few good reasons NOT to add ceramic to a metal or an alloy

- Lower ductility;
- Lower toughness;

(...frequently with consequences on strength.)

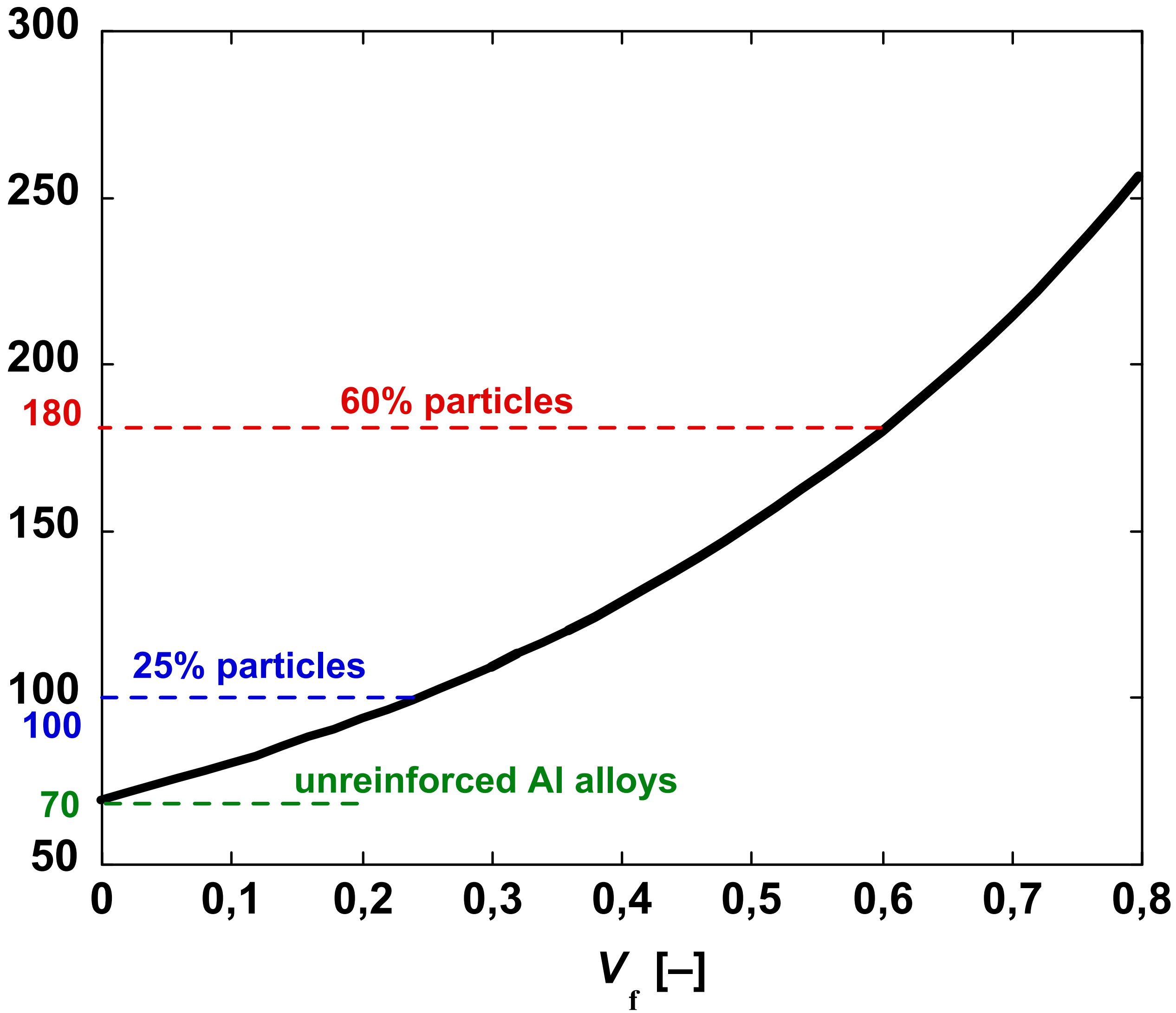
→ The volume fraction ceramic V_f is therefore generally kept below 25-30% in structural particle reinforced metals.

Why a high volume fraction ceramic might be desirable

Why a high volume fraction ceramic might be desirable

- The incremental benefit increases with the fraction ceramic;

Young's modulus of Al/Al_2O_{3p}

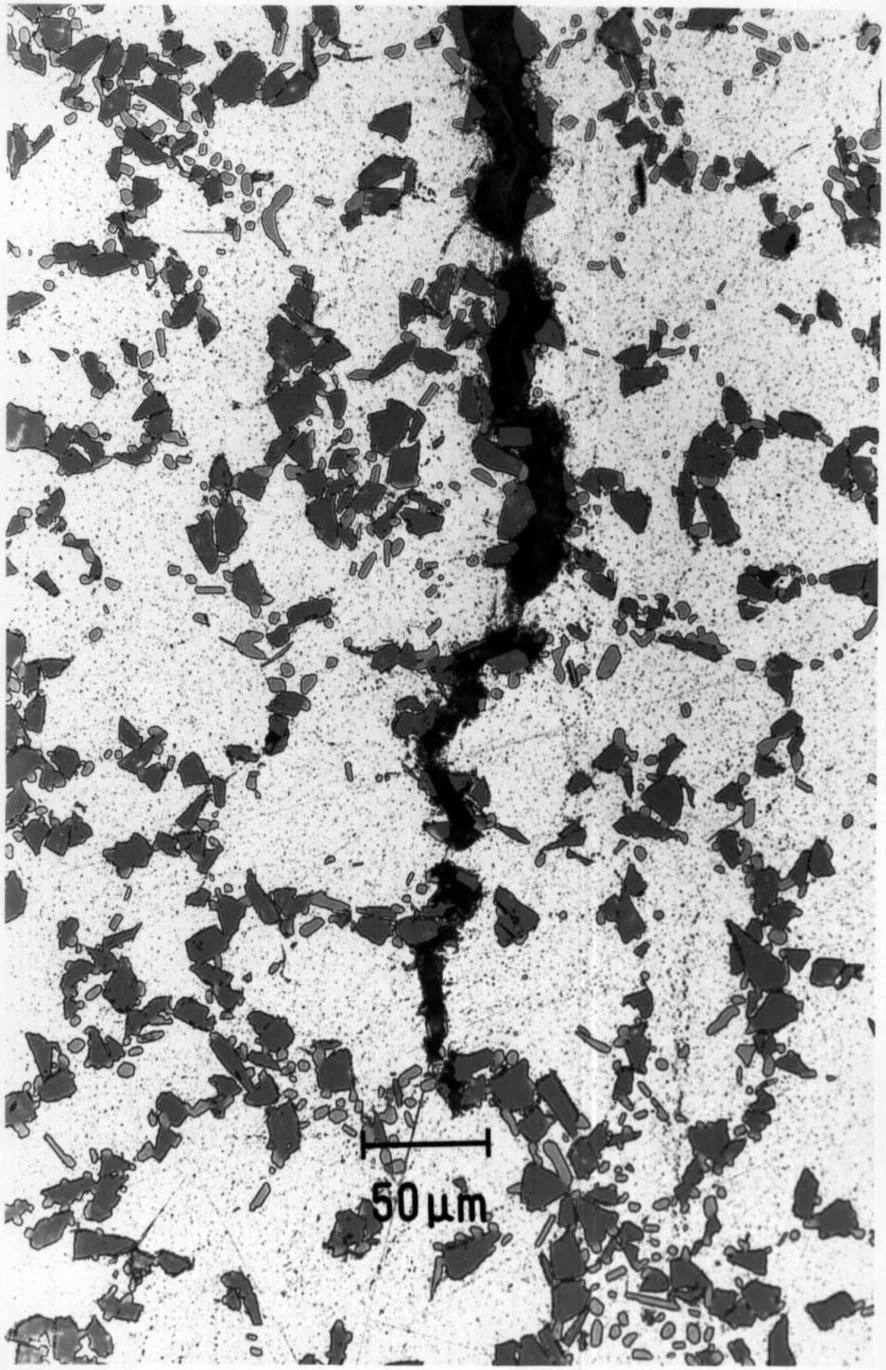


According to Christensen's 3-phase self-consistent model (E = 70 GPa and ν = 0.345 for Al, and E = 390 GPa and ν = 0.22 for Al_2O_3)

Why a high volume fraction ceramic might be desirable

- The incremental benefit increases with the fraction ceramic;

- Particle clustering.



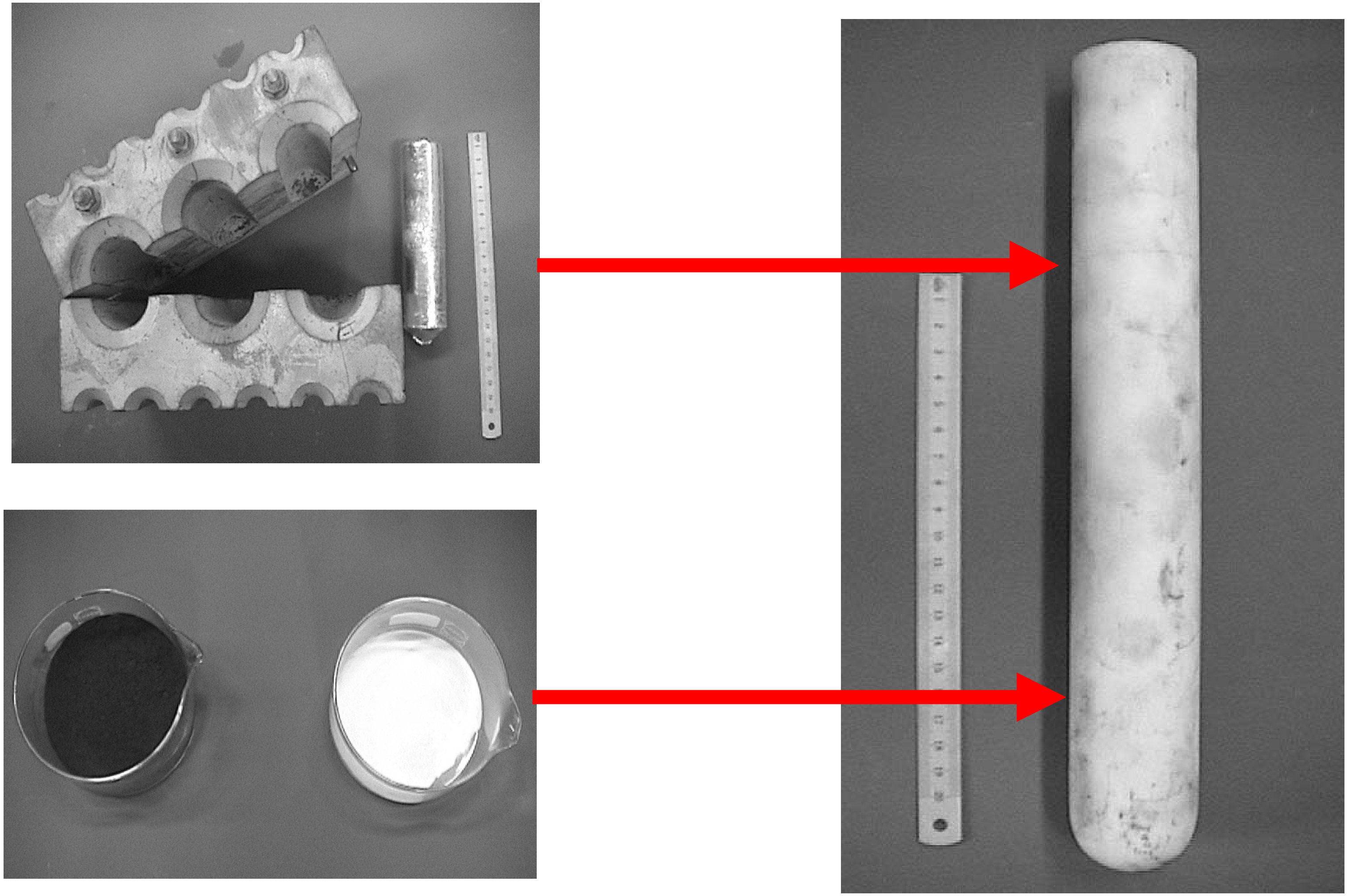
Influence of Particle Clustering:

...a somewhat extreme example, but a real one.

Gravity cast Al-356 / SiCp

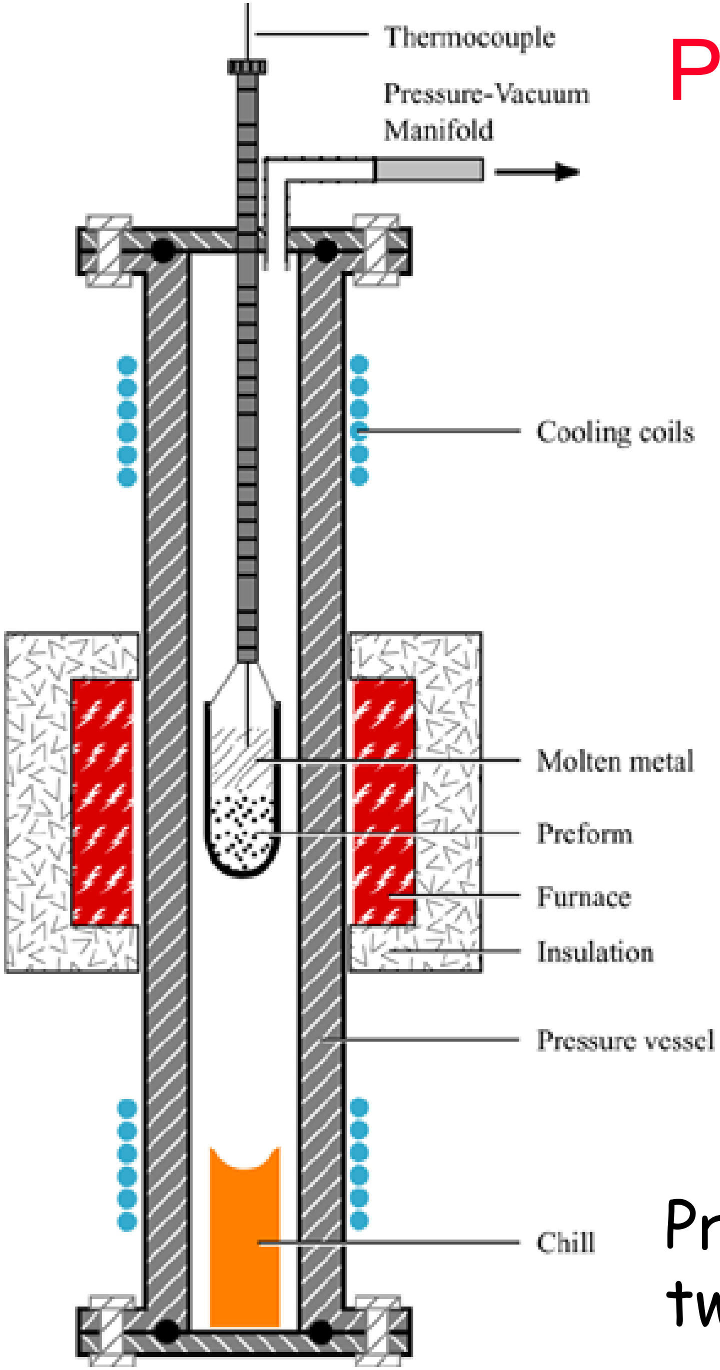
Particle Reinforced Aluminium by Infiltration

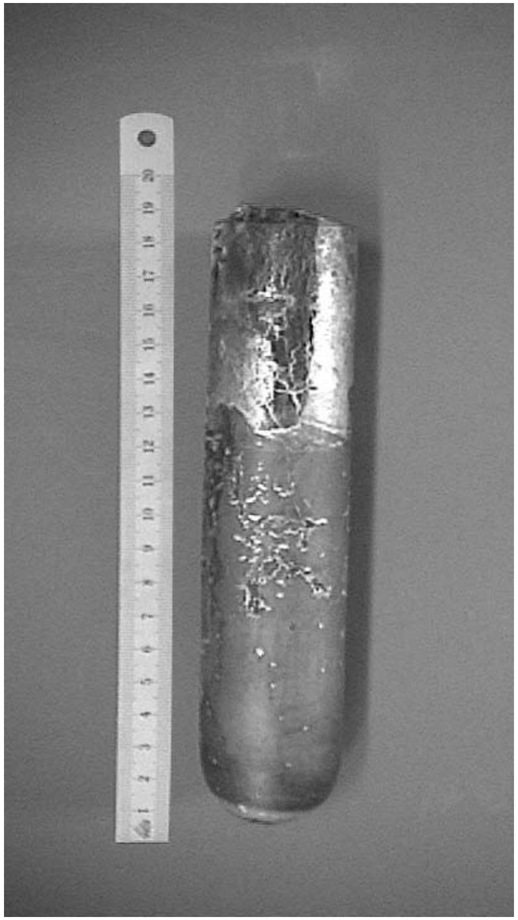
Particle Reinforced Aluminium by Infiltration



Ceramic particles and a cast metal ingot are packed, in that order, into an alumina crucible

Particle Reinforced Aluminium by Infiltration





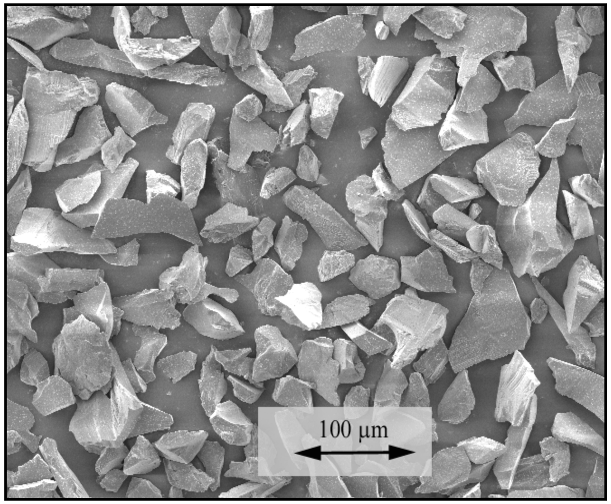
Pressure infiltration then combines the two into an ingot of composite

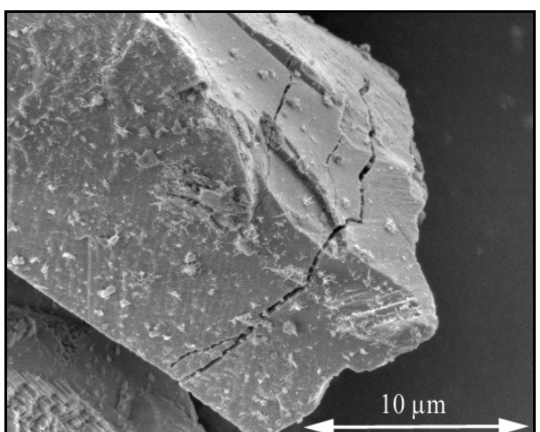
Three Matrices

- *99.99% pure Al*
- *Al-2wt.% Cu*
  (as-cast, T4 and T6)
- *Al-4.5wt.% Cu*
  (as-cast, T4 and T6)

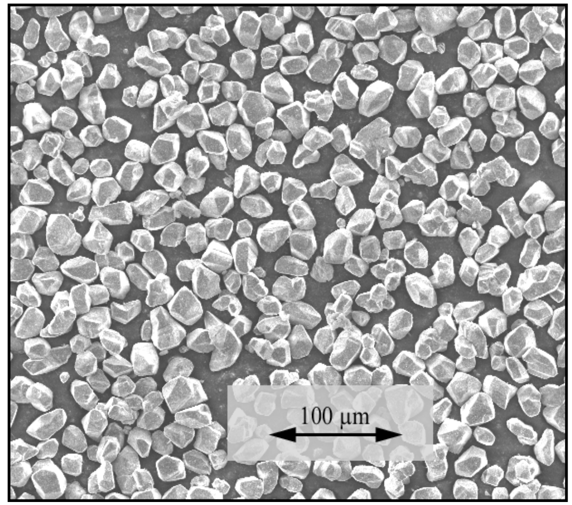
Three Reinforcement Types

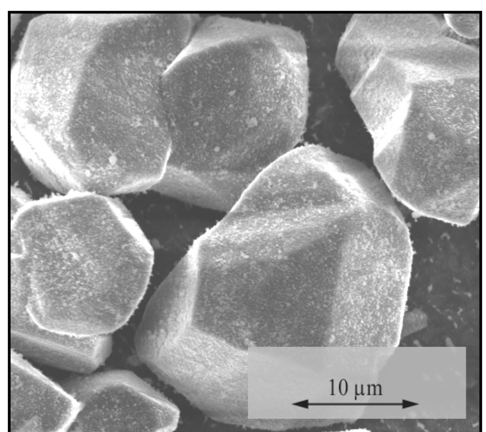
Angular Al_2O_3



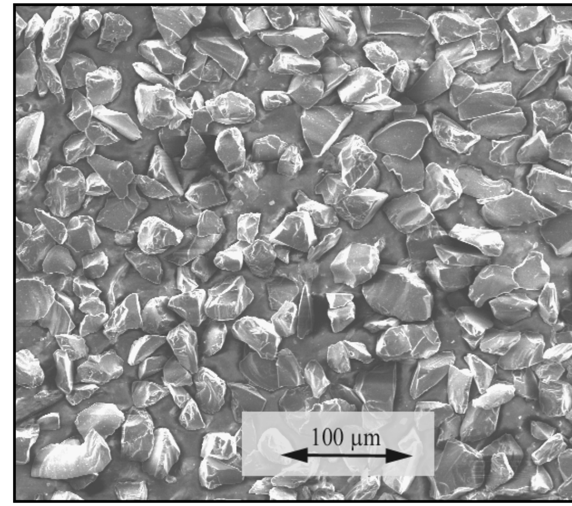


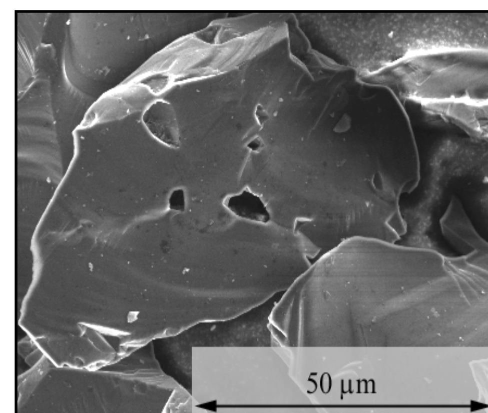
Polygonal Al_2O_3





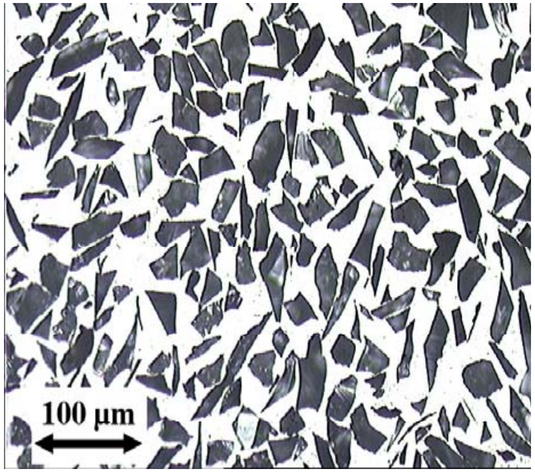
Angular B_4C





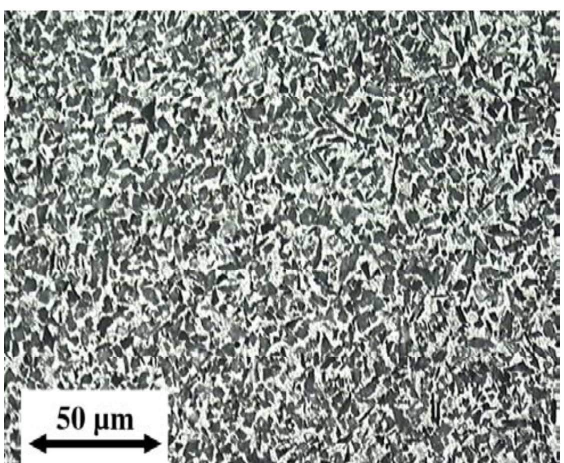
Infiltrated Particle Reinforced Aluminium

Angular Al_2O_3

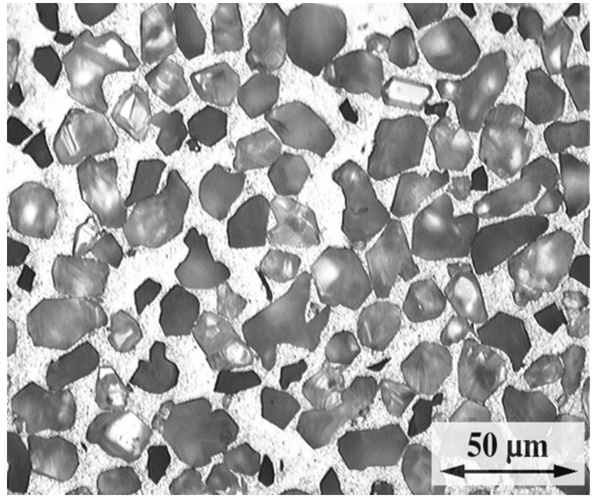


35 µm

5 µm

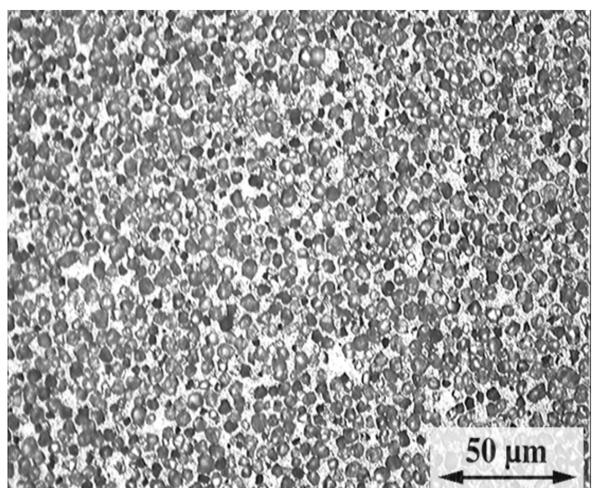


Polygonal Al_2O_3

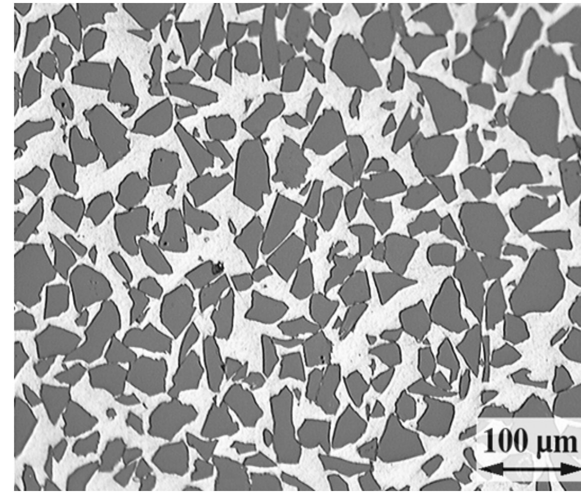


25 µm

5 µm

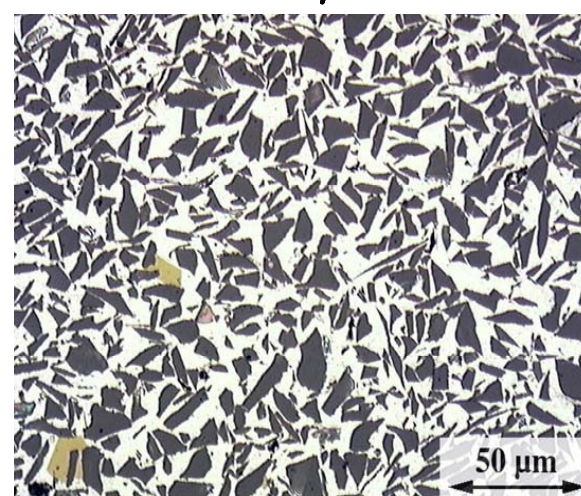


B_4C



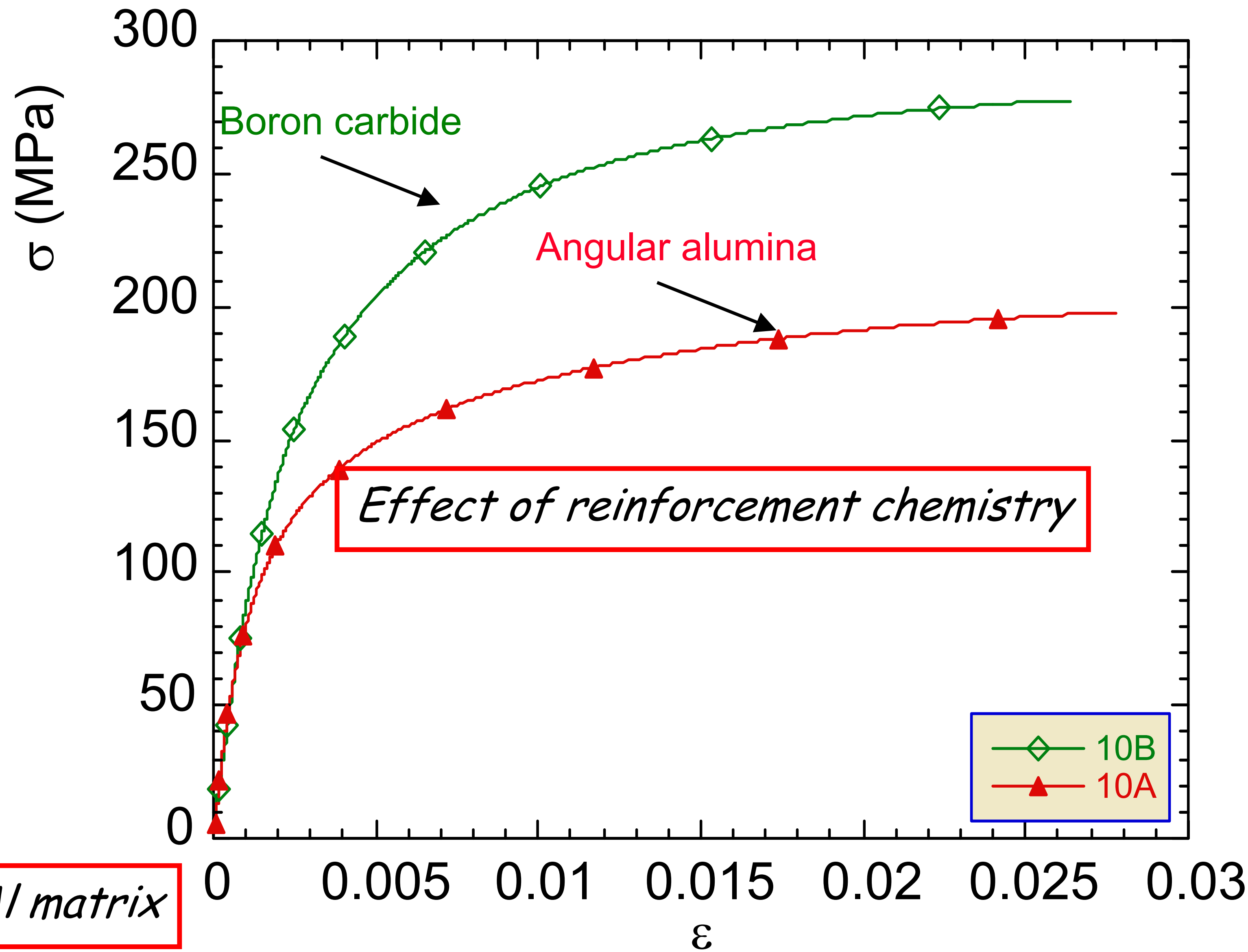
35 µm

10 µm



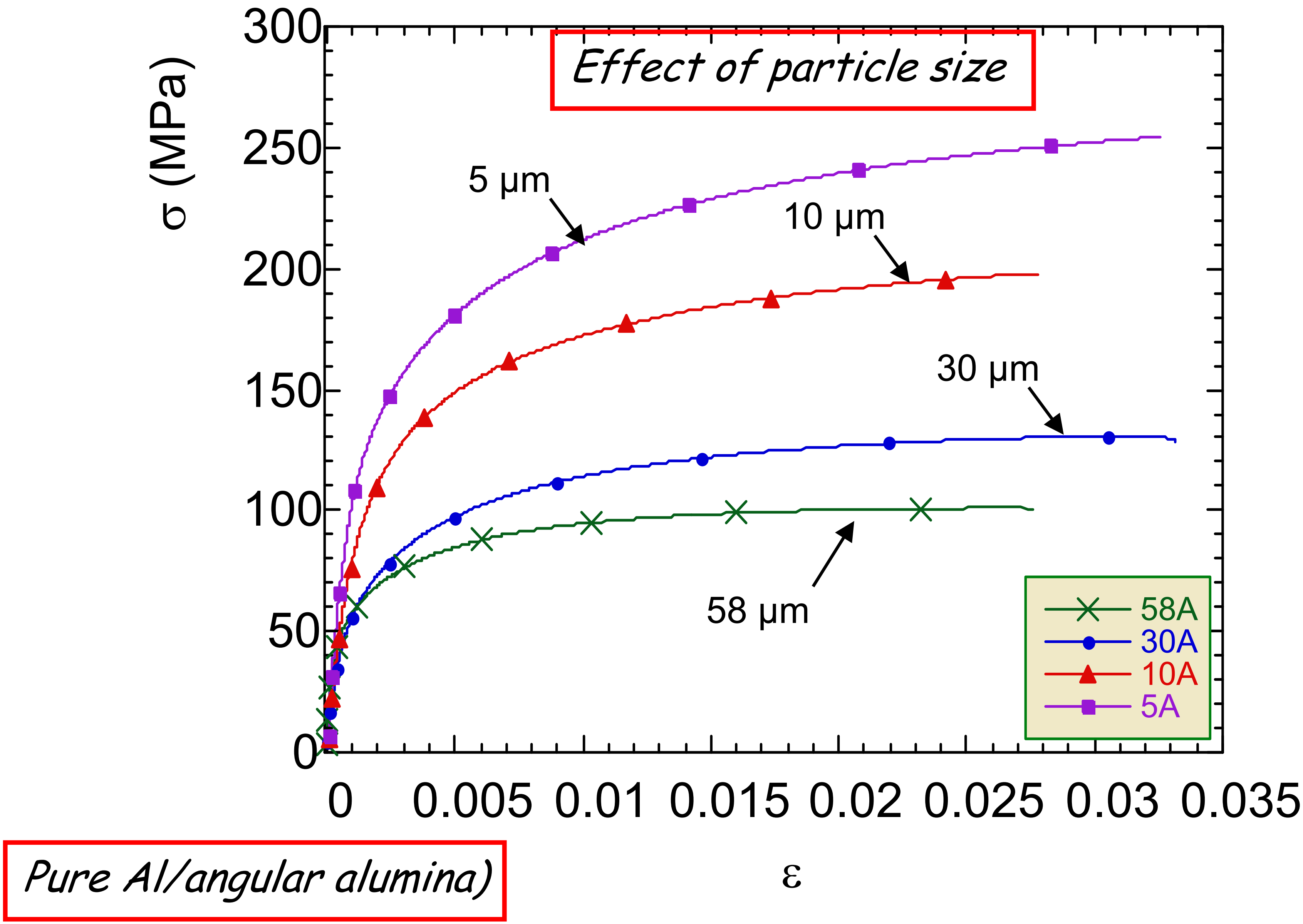
Tensile Behaviour

Tensile Behaviour

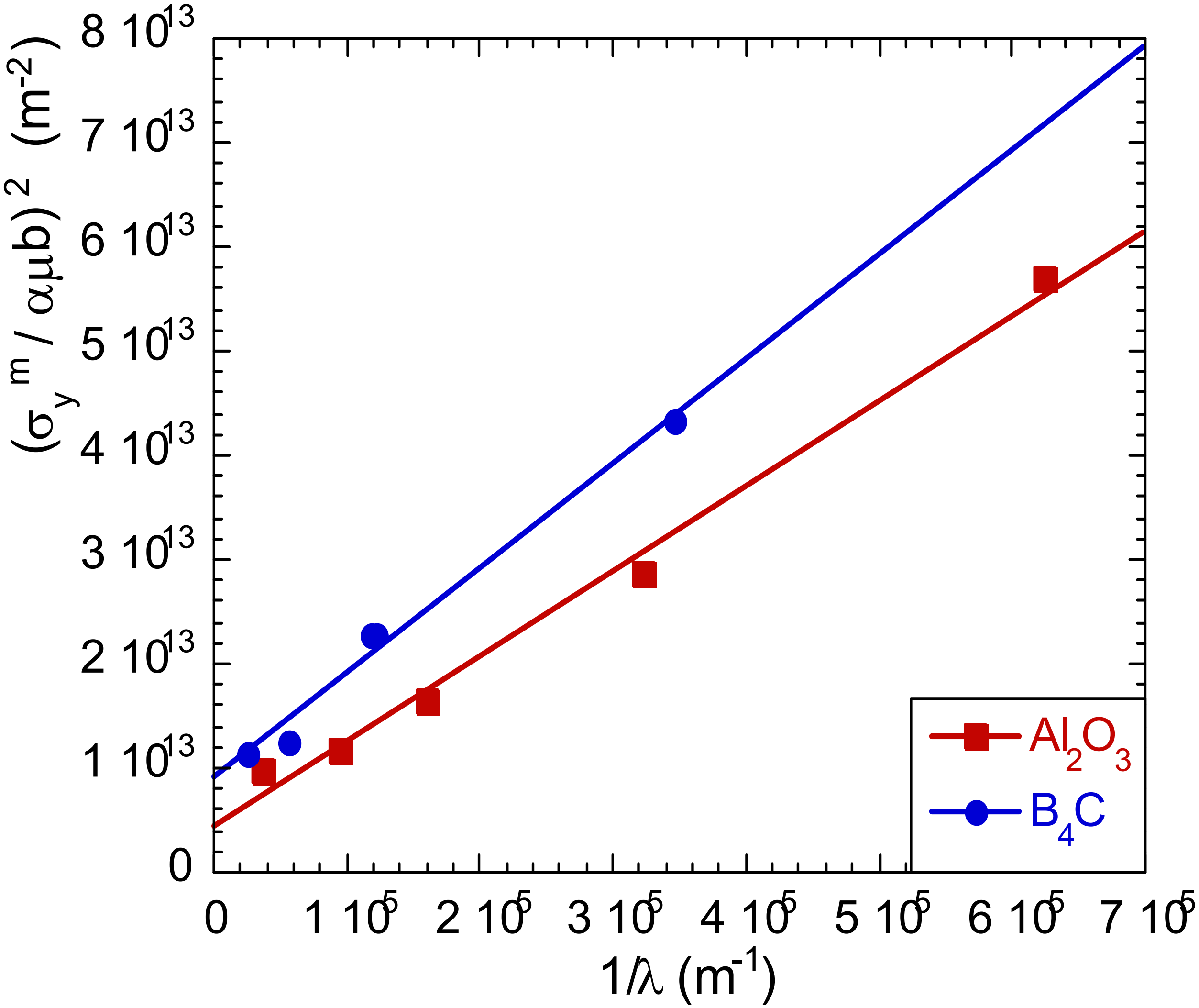


Pure Al matrix

Tensile Behaviour

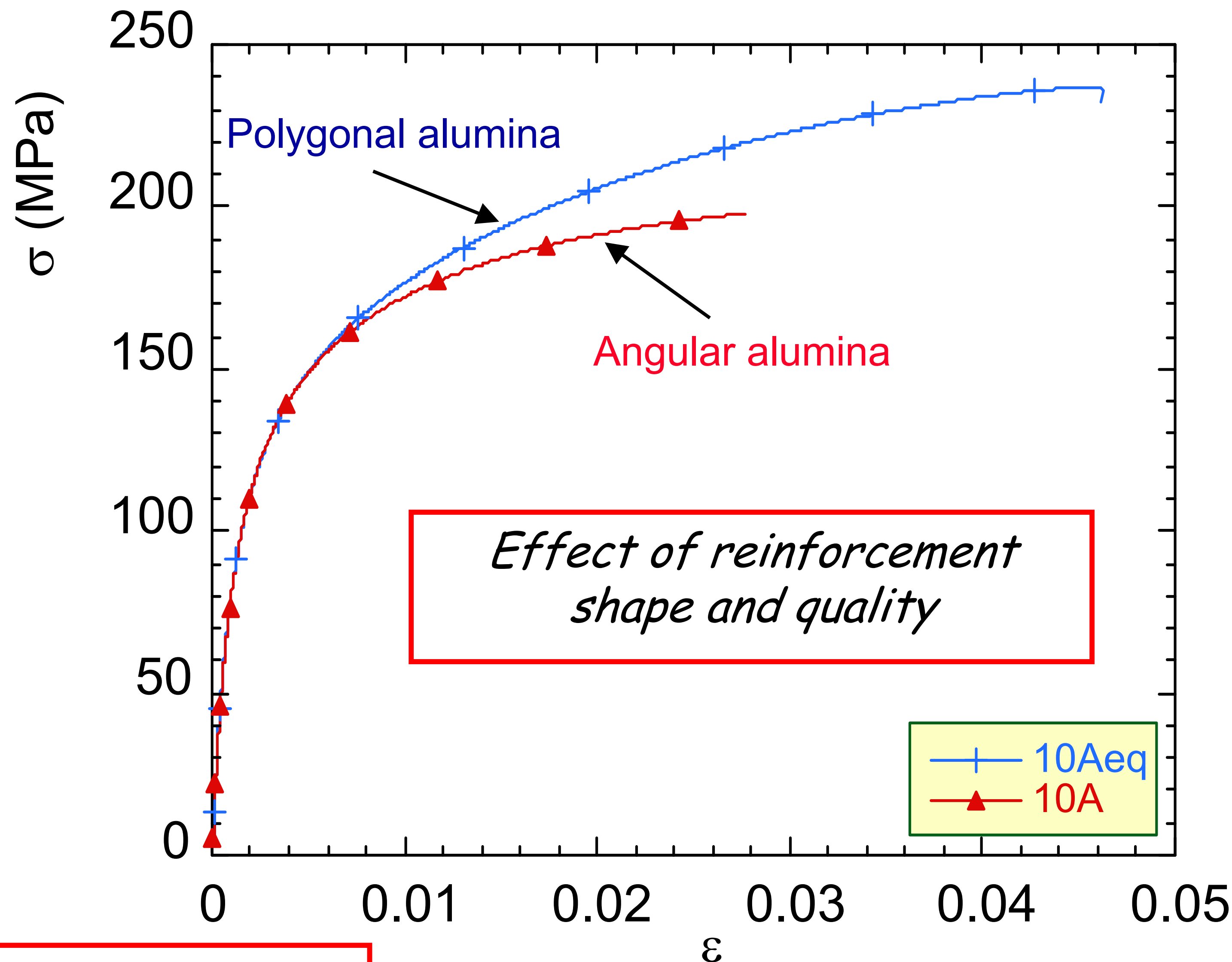


The Size Effect



Comparing Al_2O_3 with B_4C:
- *ΔCTE* is 1.3 times higher for B_4C;
- the experimental slope is 1.25 times higher.

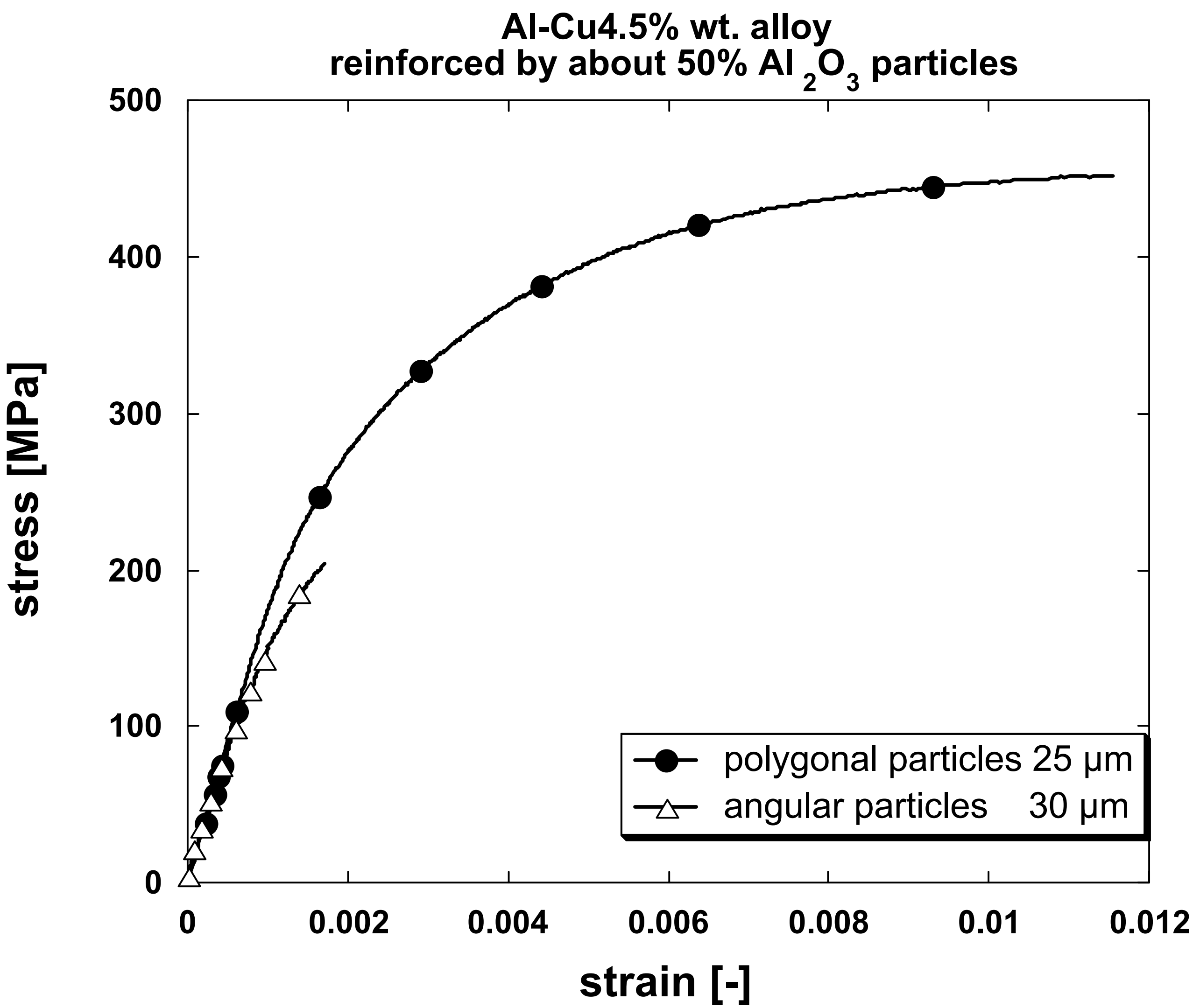
Tensile Behaviour



Pure Al matrix; 10μm Al_2O_3

Tensile behaviour

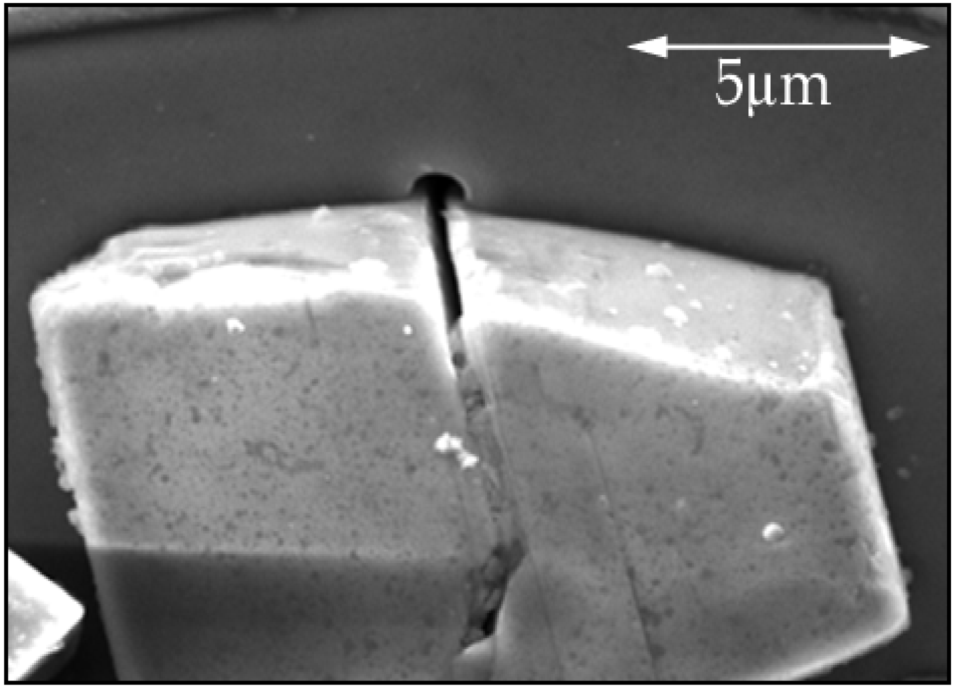
Illustrating the influence of particle type

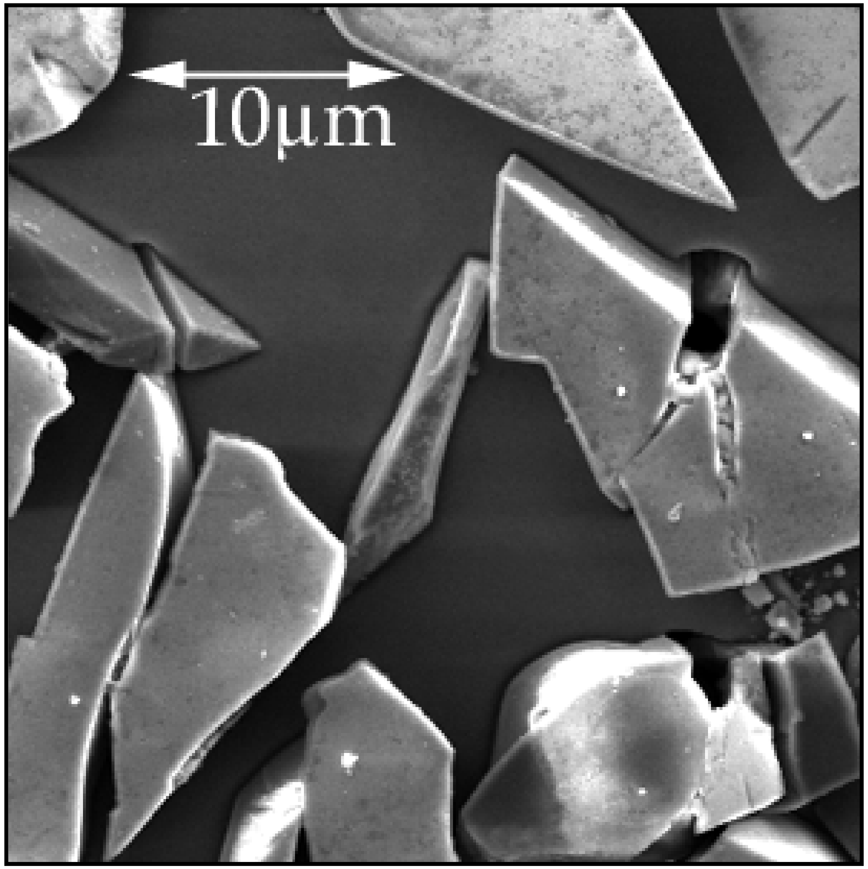


Damage

Damage

1 - Particle fracture followed by void nucleation in the matrix at particle cracks



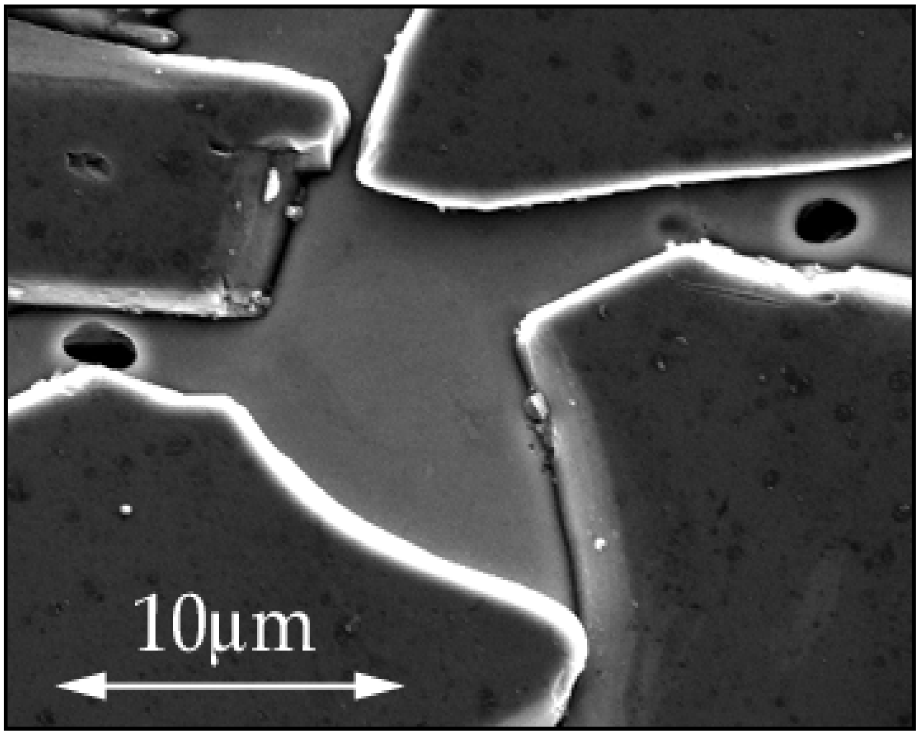


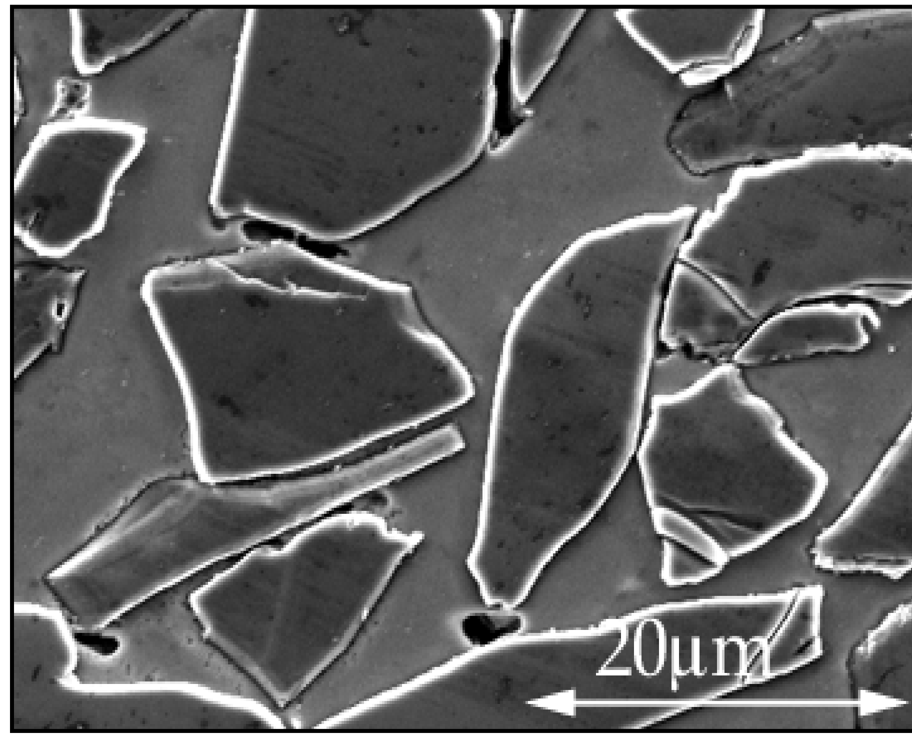
Al_2O_3 (angular) - Al

↔ σ

Damage

2 - Matrix voiding at sites of high stress triaxiality





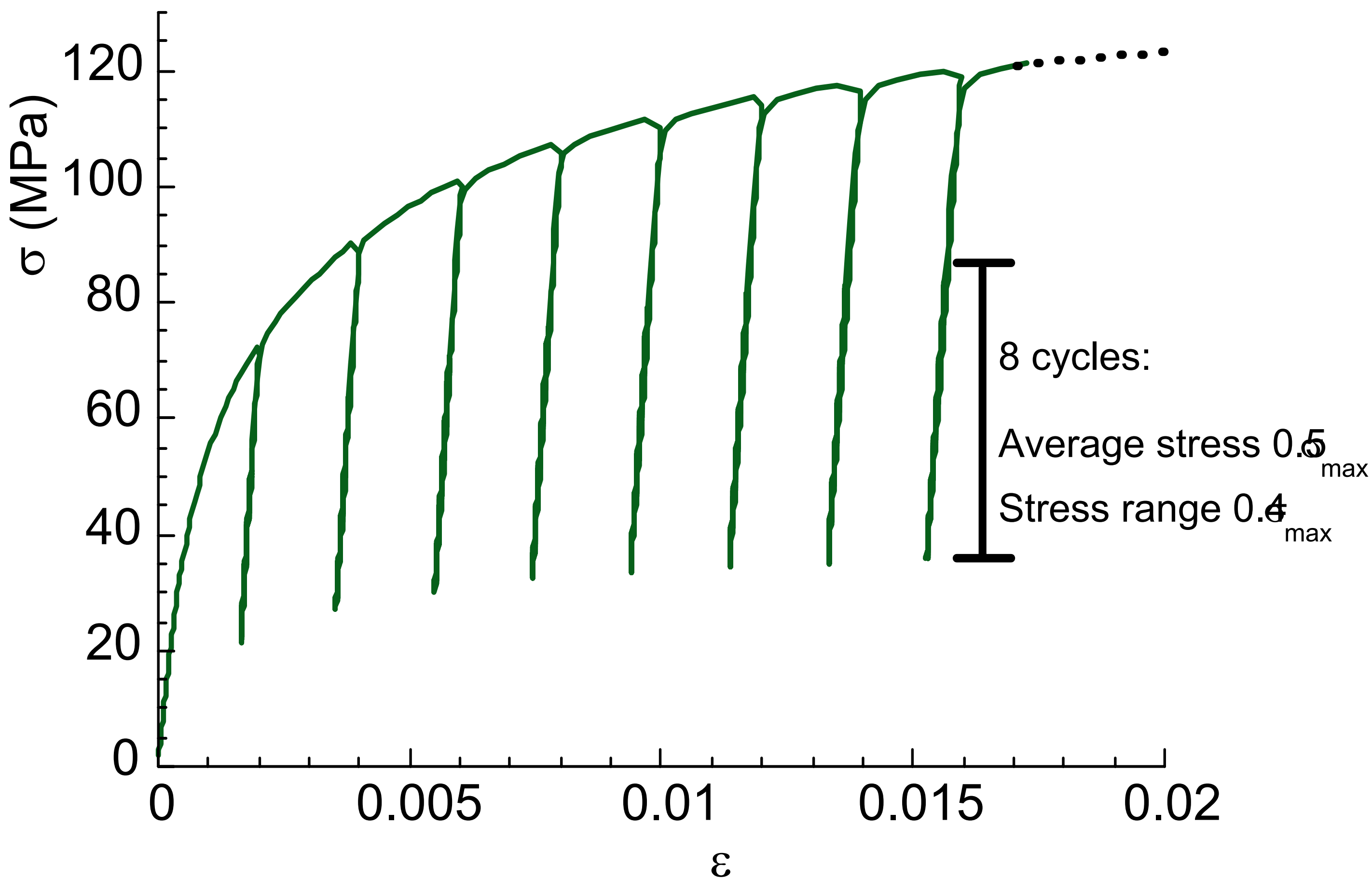
B_4C-Al

σ

Damage

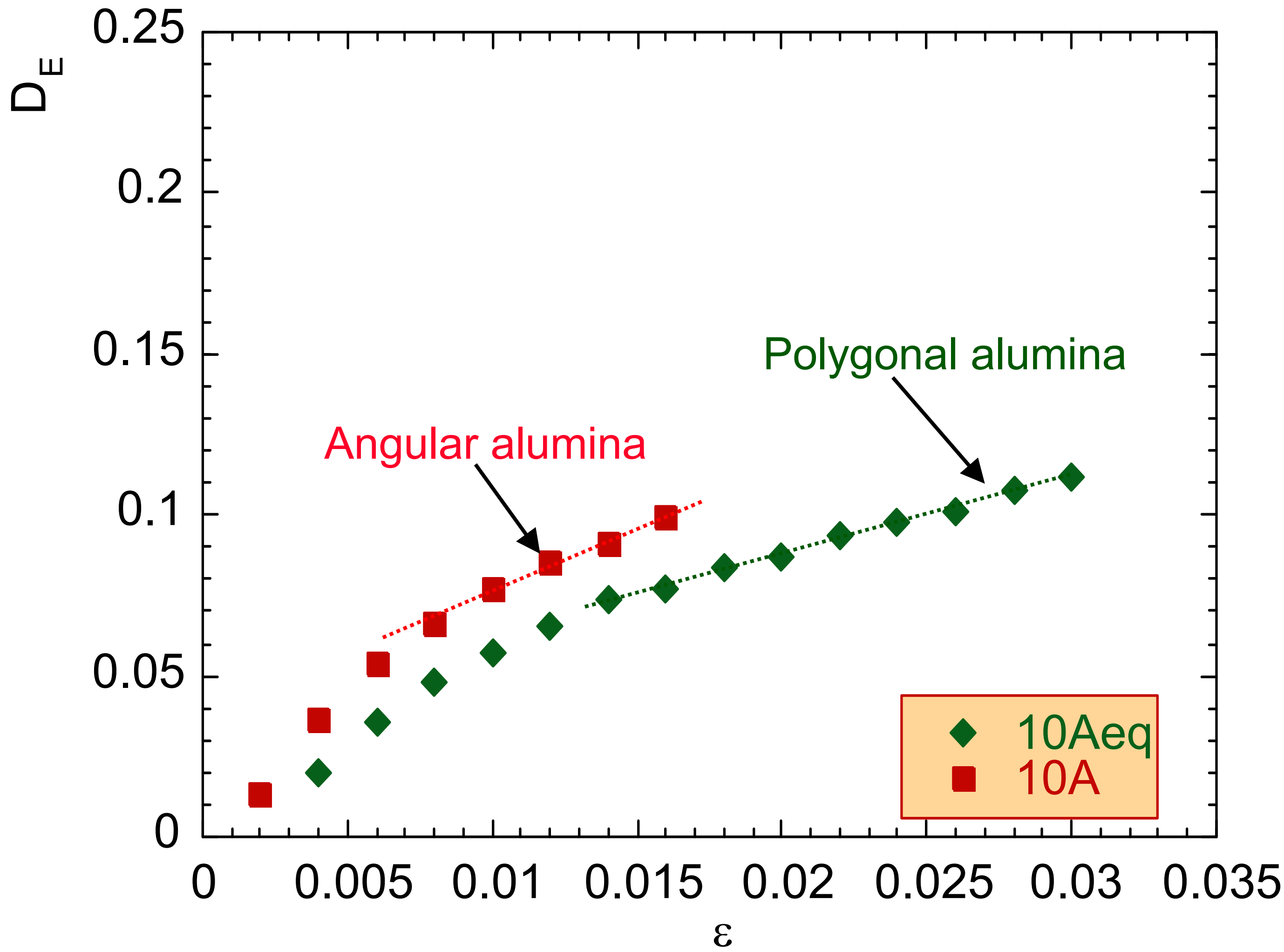
Measurement:

- Young 's modulus evolution with strain
- Derived damage parameter: $D_E = 1 - E/E_0$



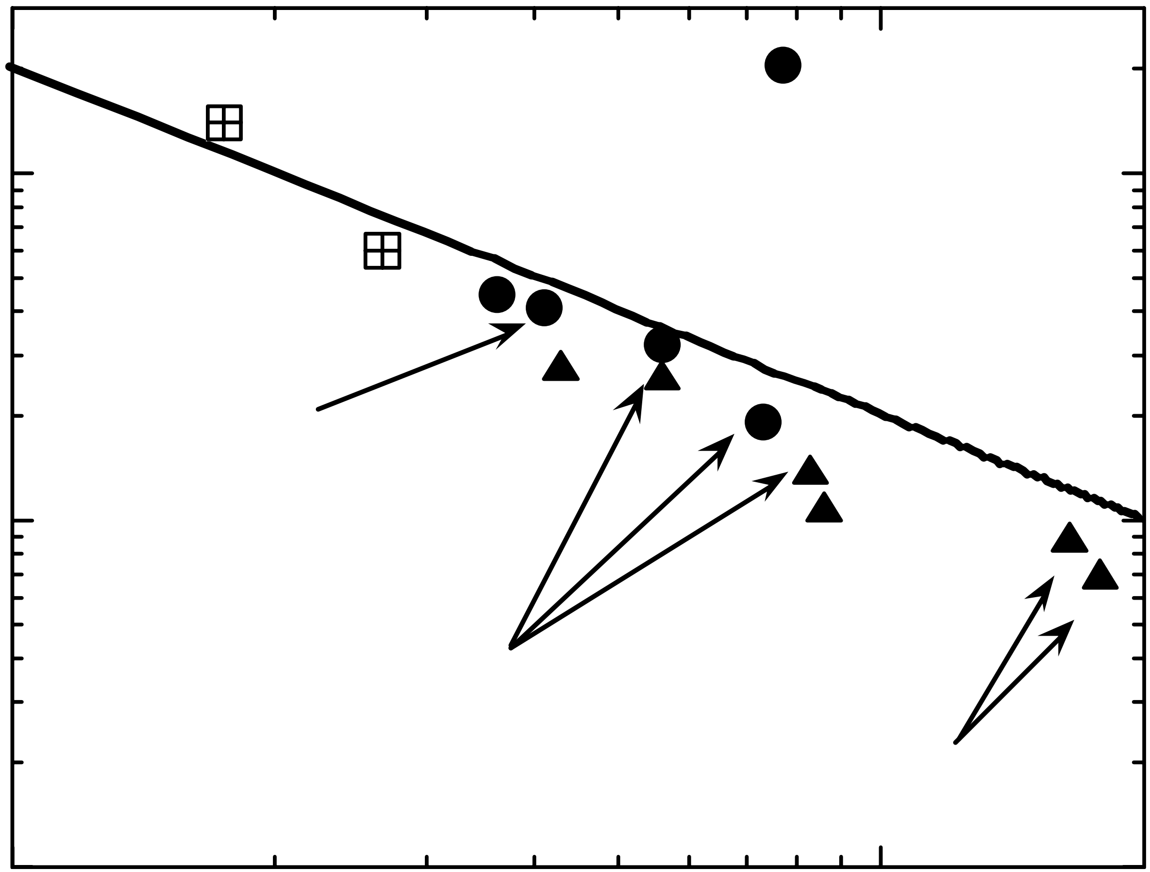
Damage

Measuring the rate of damage accumulation



Link between Damage and Tensile Ductility

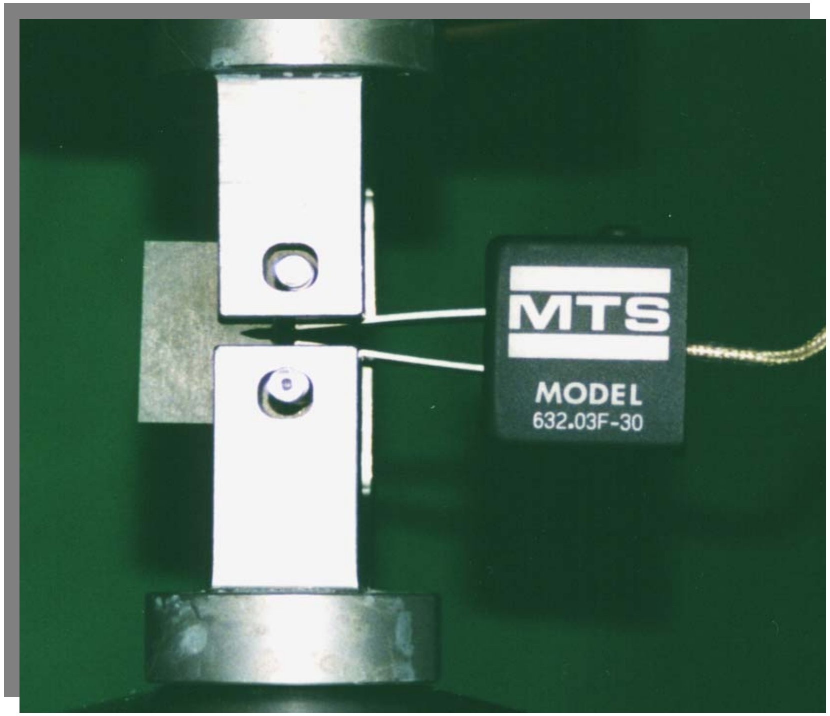
$$\varepsilon_f = \frac{n}{1 - \frac{d\ln(D_E)}{d\varepsilon}}$$

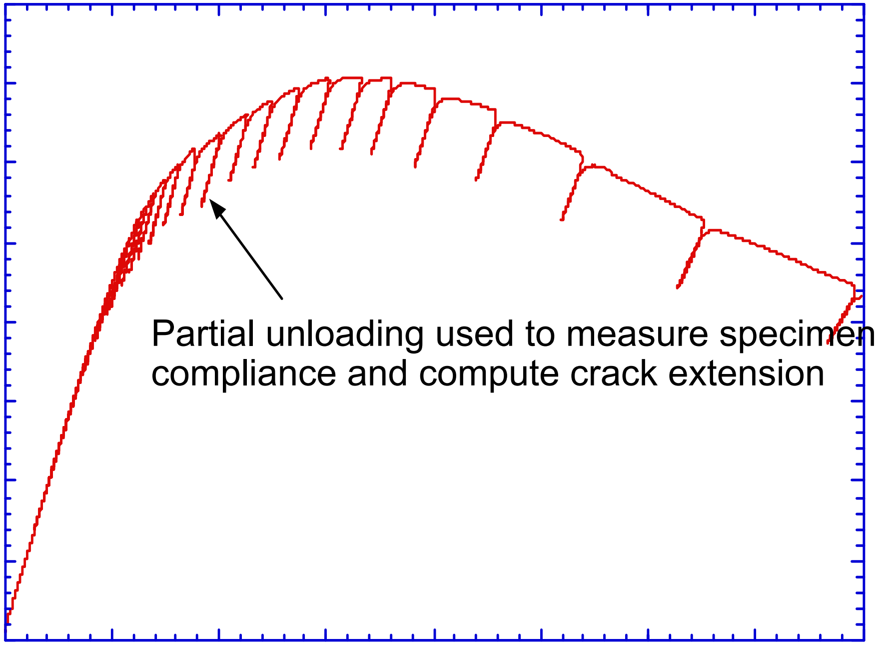


Fracture Toughness

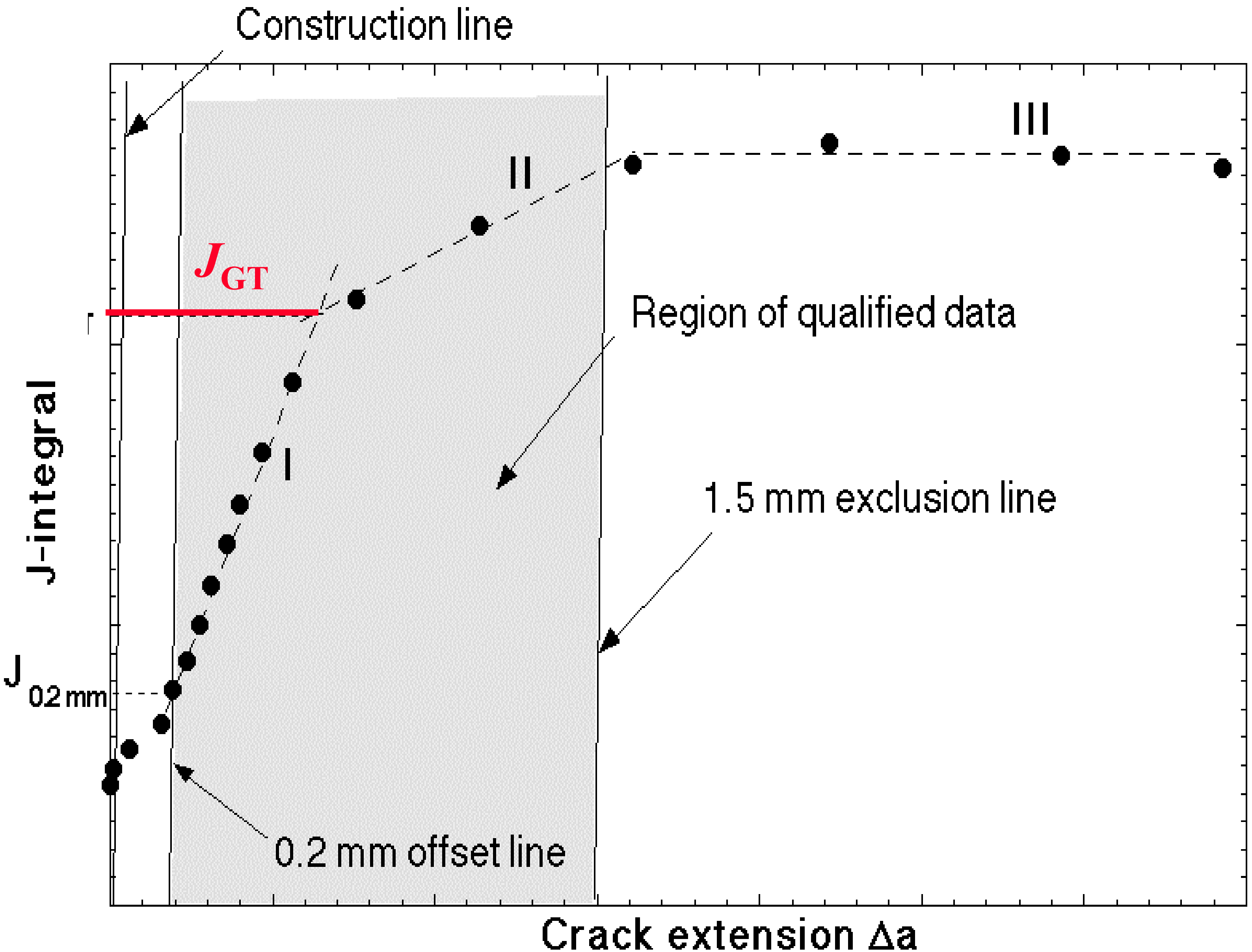
Toughness

- J_R method for pure Al composites using precracked CT specimens (ASTM E-1737);
- Unloading compliance method used to monitor crack growth





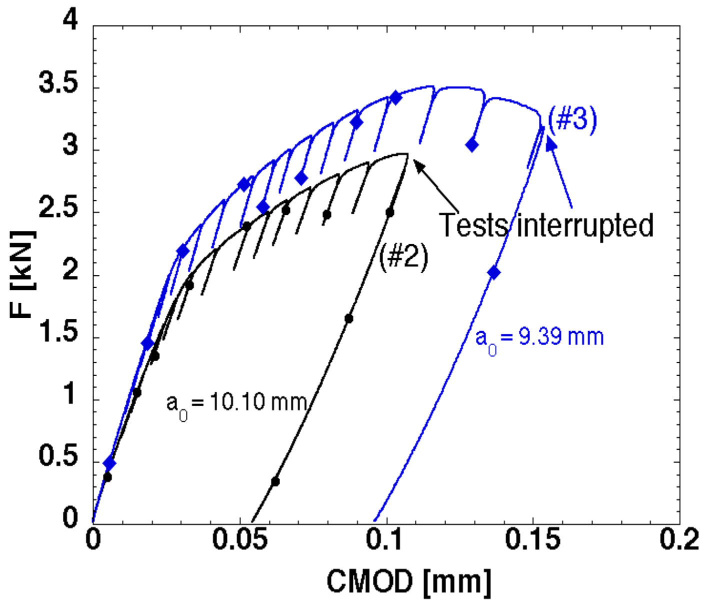
Toughness



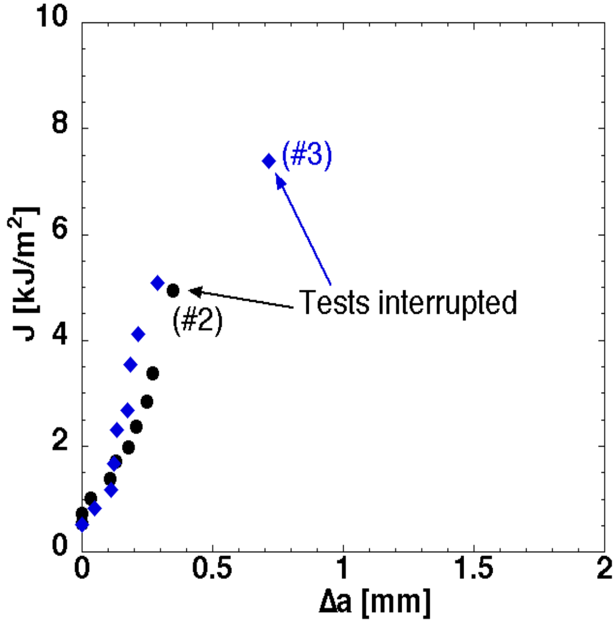
Construction line
III
II
J_{GT}
Region of qualified data
I
1.5 mm exclusion line
J-integral
J 02 mm
0.2 mm offset line
Crack extension Δa

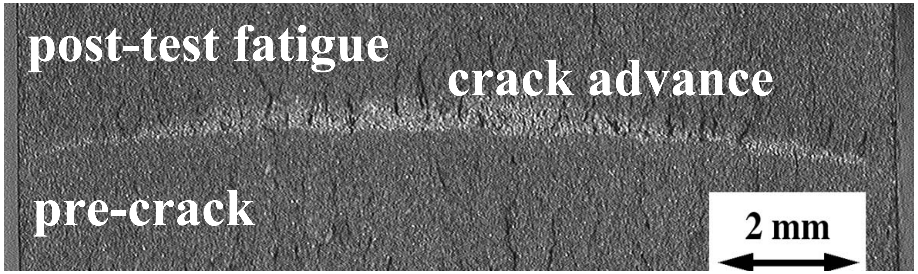
Toughness

J_{GT} corresponds to the onset of marked crack advance

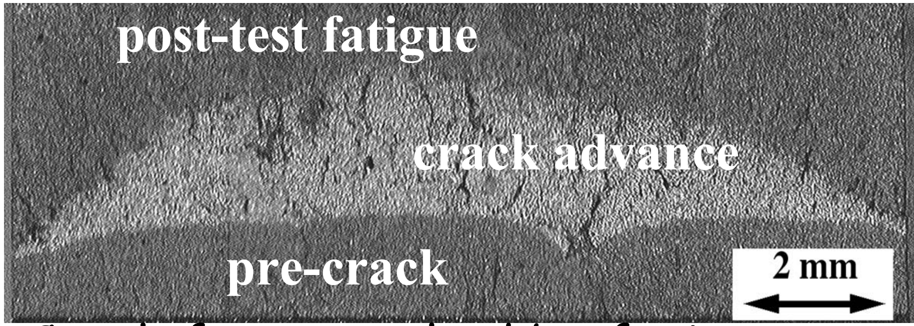


(pure Al/25 µm Al_2O_3 polyg. composites)





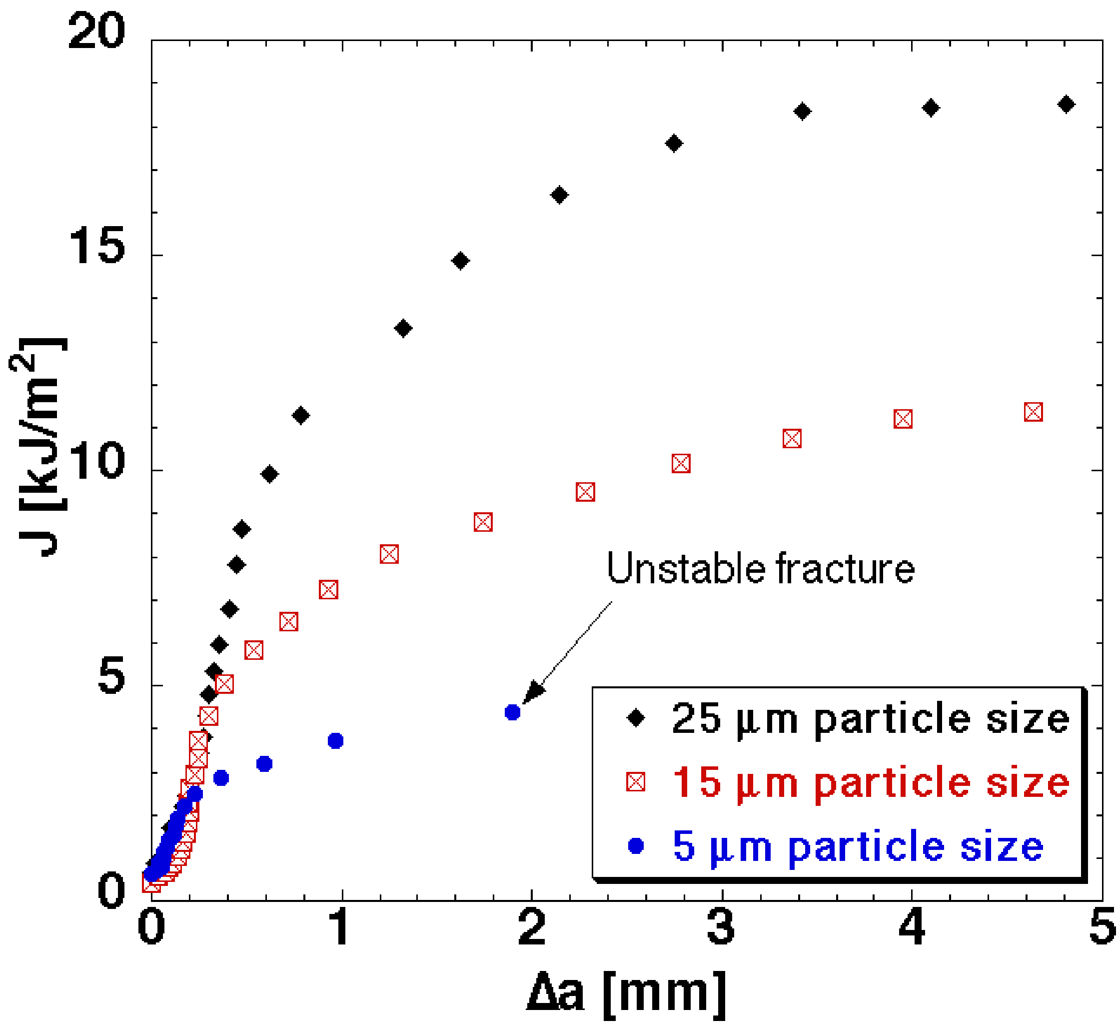
Crack front marked by fatigue, specimen #2



Crack front marked by fatigue, specimen #3

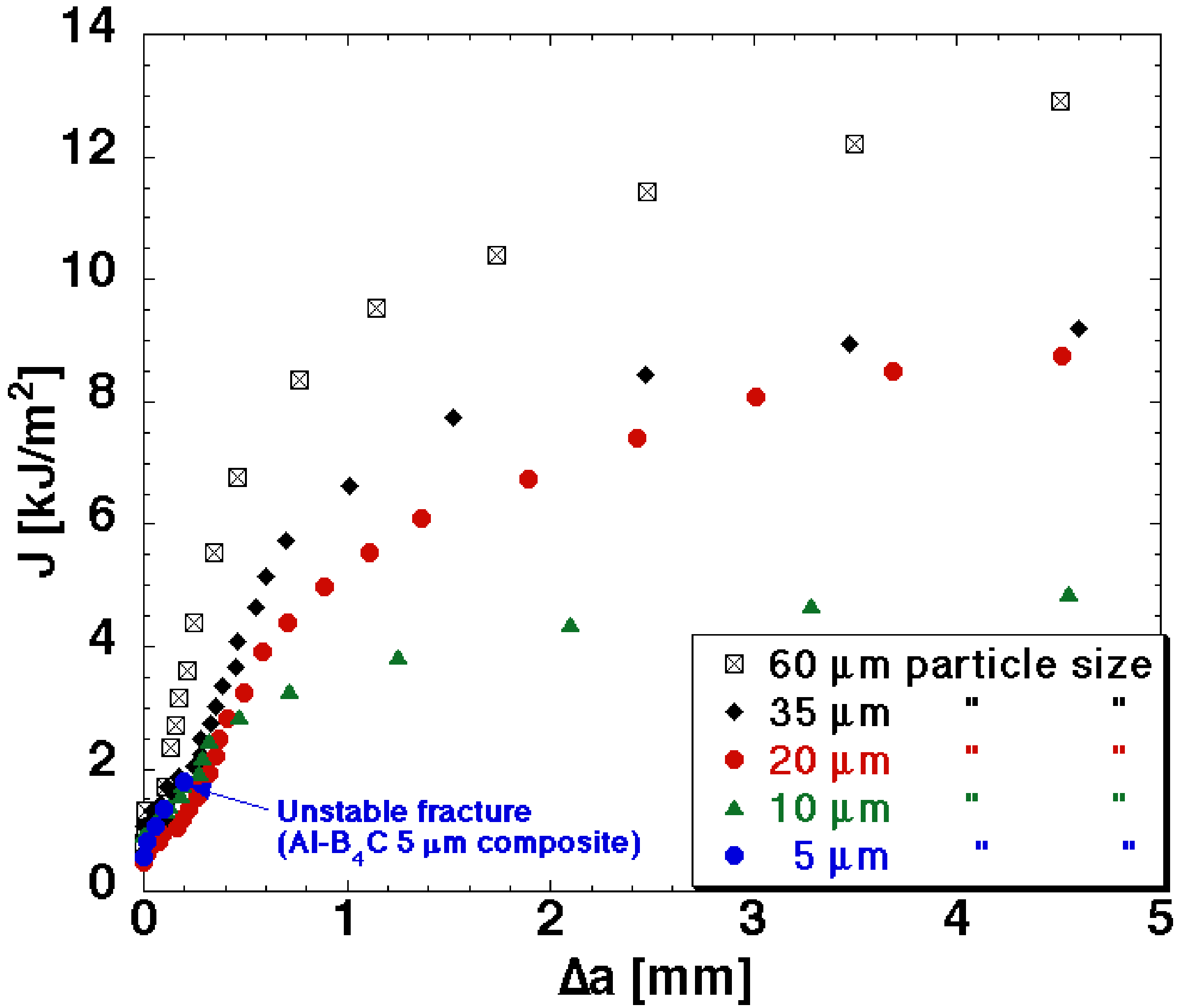
Toughness

Polygonal Al_2O_3 particles/pure Al: influence of particle size



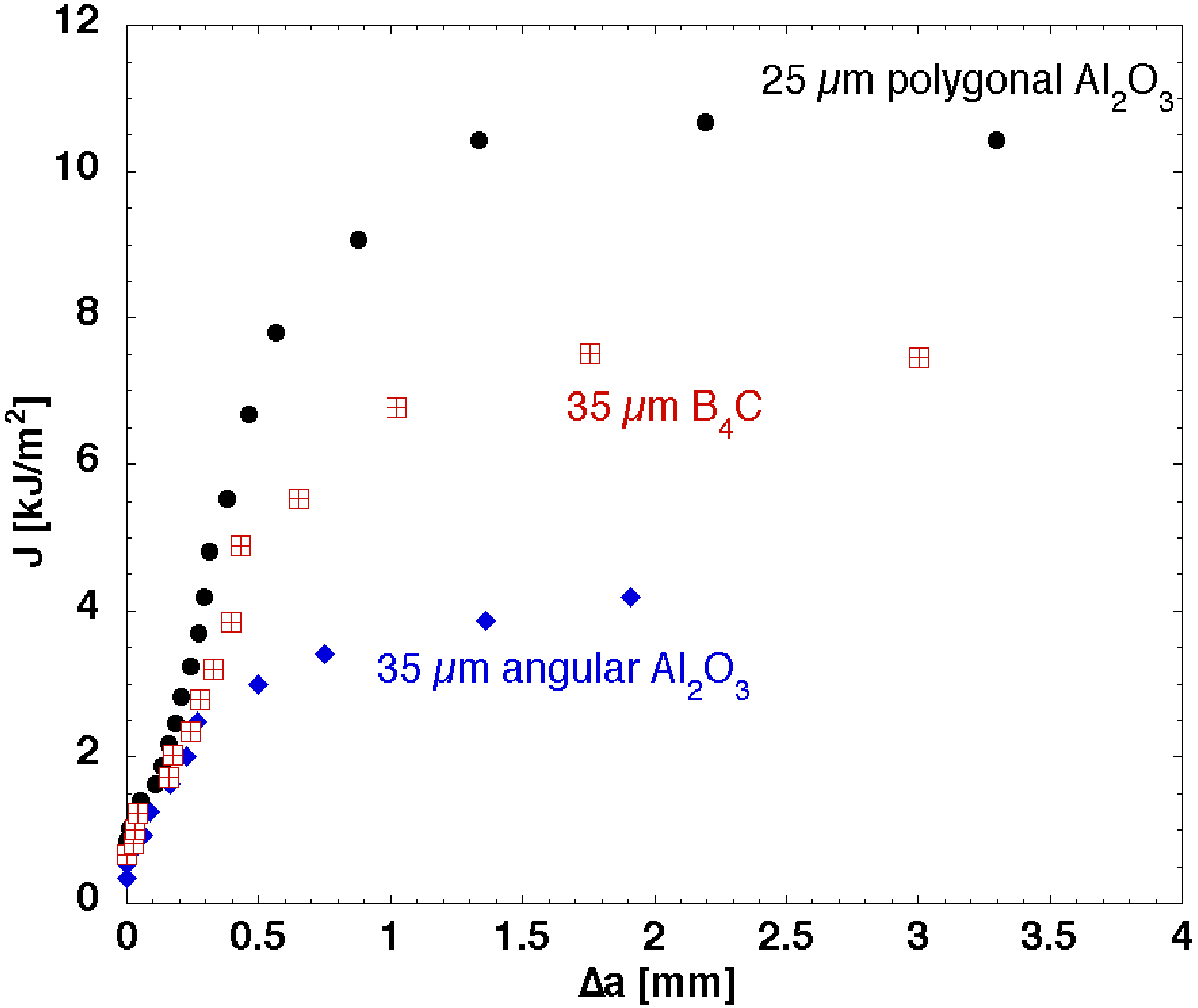
Toughness

B$_4$C particles/pure Al: influence of particle size

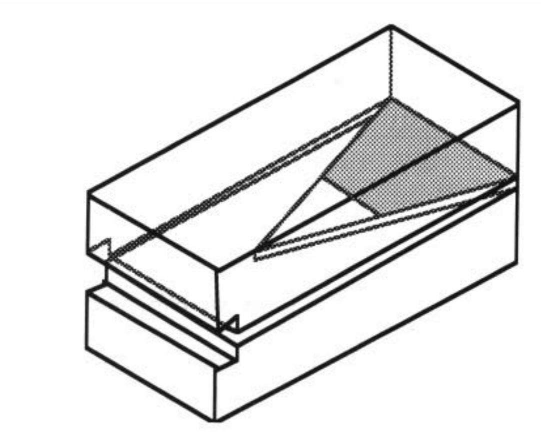


Toughness

Equal size: influence of reinforcement nature and quality

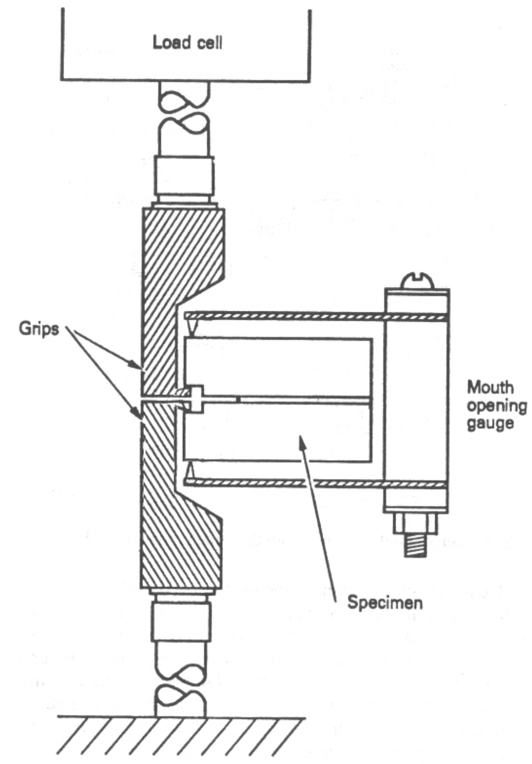


Toughness

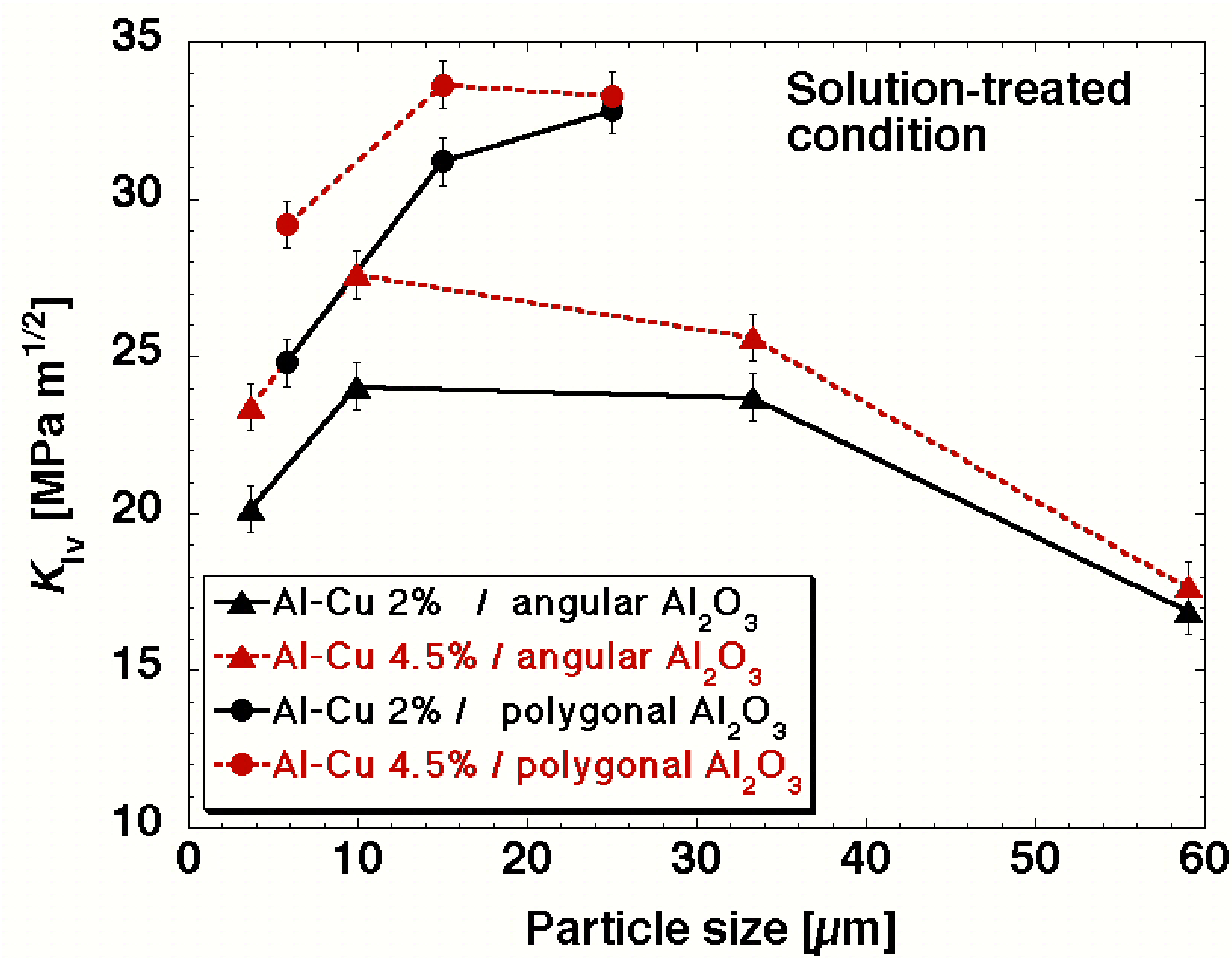


Alloyed matrix composites were characterized in small-scale yielding using chevron-notched specimens (ASTM E-1304)

Consistency: *J*-integral test data for Al-Cu matrix composites are between 2 and 27% lower than chevron-notched test data.



Toughness

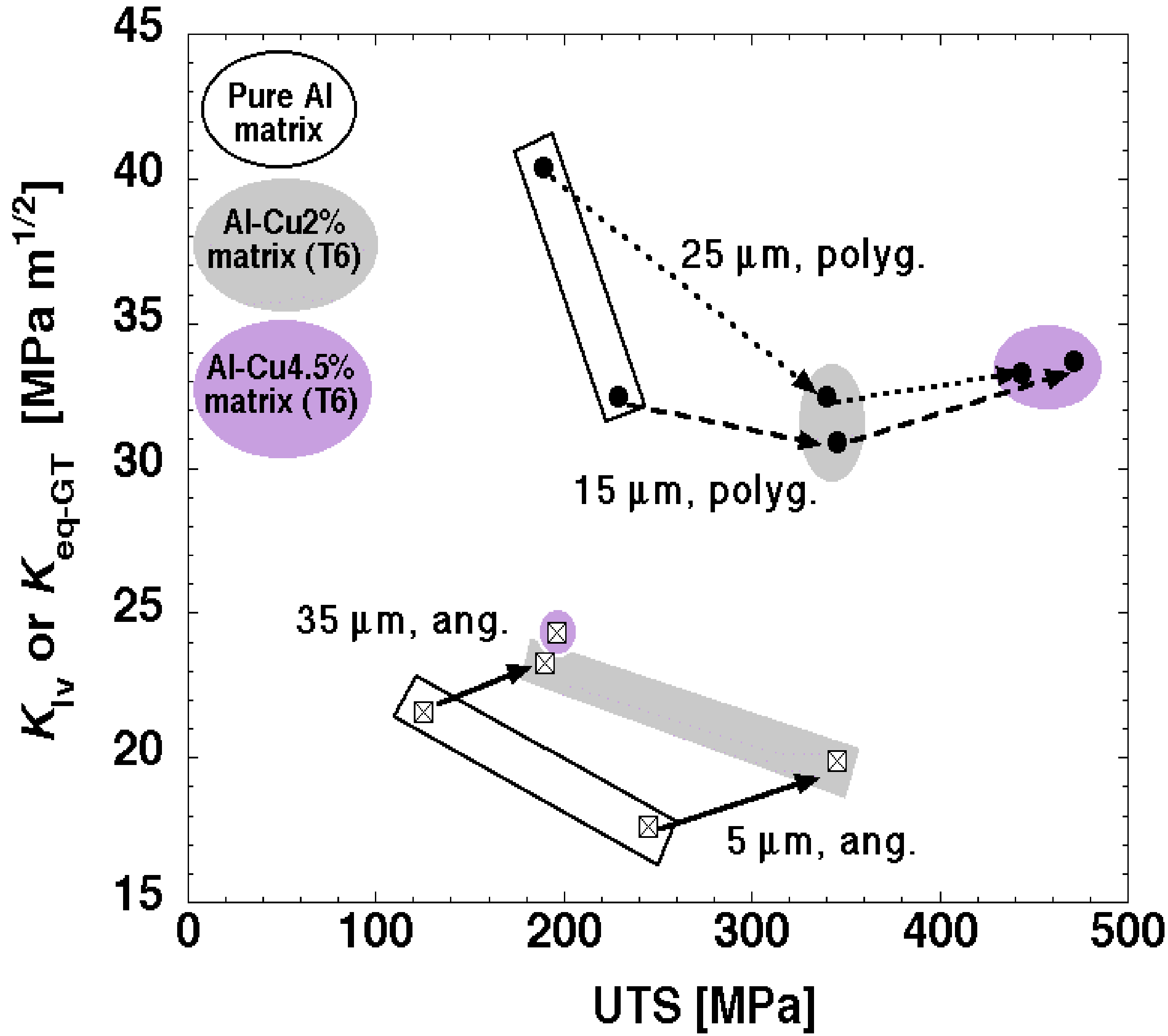


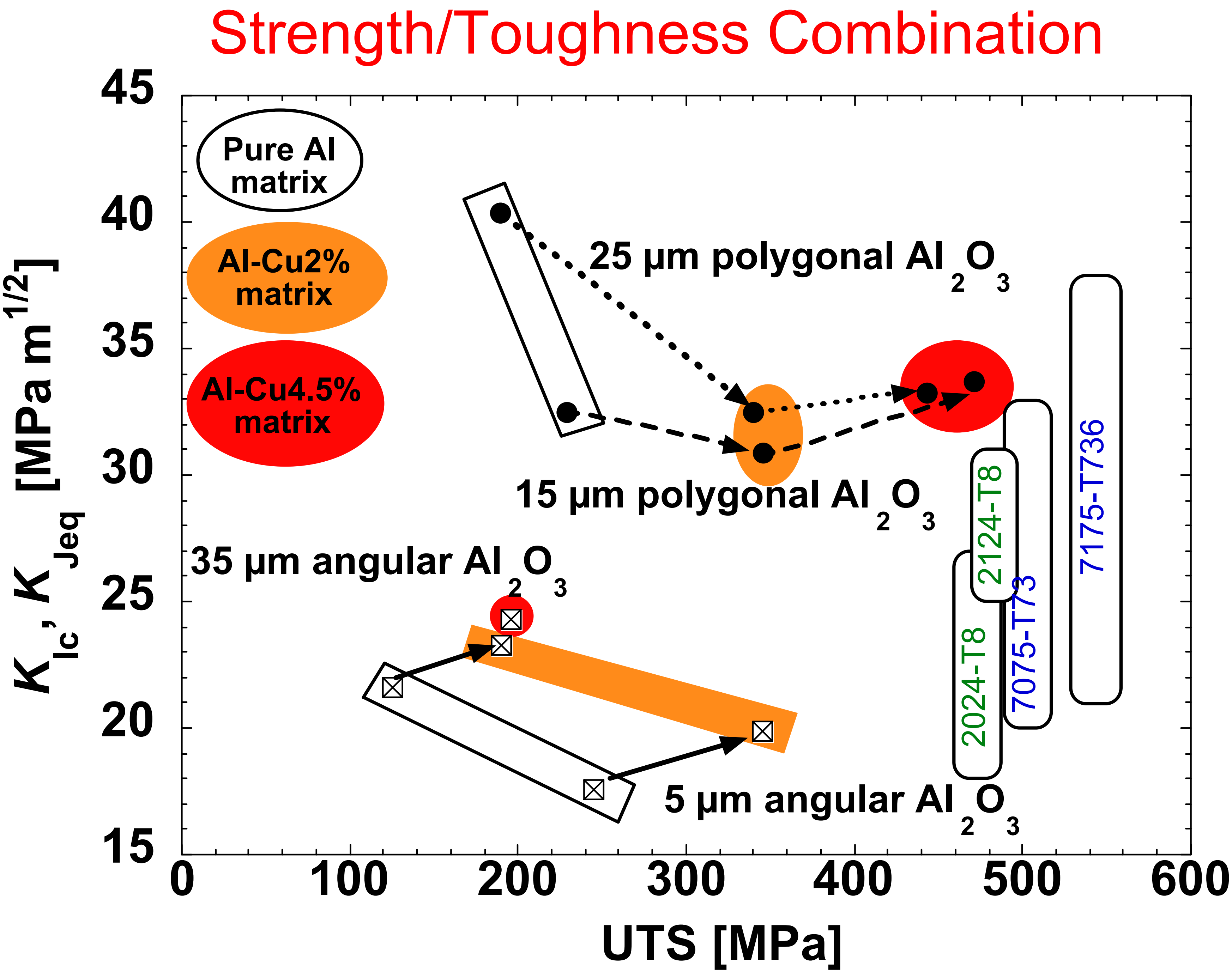
35
30
25
20
15
10
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
K_{Iv} [MPa m$^{1/2}$]
Particle size [μm]
Solution-treated condition
Al-Cu 2% / angular Al_2O_3
Al-Cu 4.5% / angular Al_2O_3
Al-Cu 2% / polygonal Al_2O_3
Al-Cu 4.5% / polygonal Al_2O_3

Strength/Toughness Combination

Strength/Toughness Combination

Overall summary of data:





Strength/Toughness Combination
Pure Al matrix
Al-Cu2% matrix
Al-Cu4.5% matrix
25 µm polygonal Al2O3
15 µm polygonal Al2O3
35 µm angular Al2O3
5 µm angular Al2O3
2024-T8
2124-T8
7075-T73
7175-T736
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
0
100
200
300
400
500
600
UTS [MPa]
KIc, KJeq [MPa m1/2]

Toughening mechanisms

Toughening mechanisms

What makes these composites tough ?

- A first very simple mechanism:
$K \alpha \sqrt{(G.E)}$
and E is 2.5 times higher than for *Al* alloys.

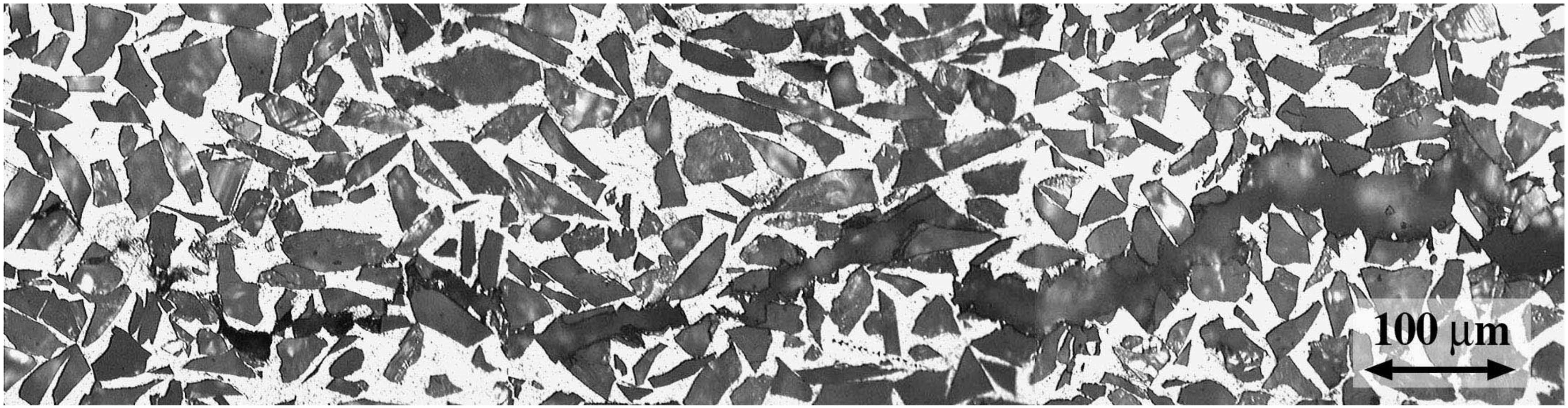
- Still, corresponding *G/(J)* values near 10 kJ/m^2 are high.

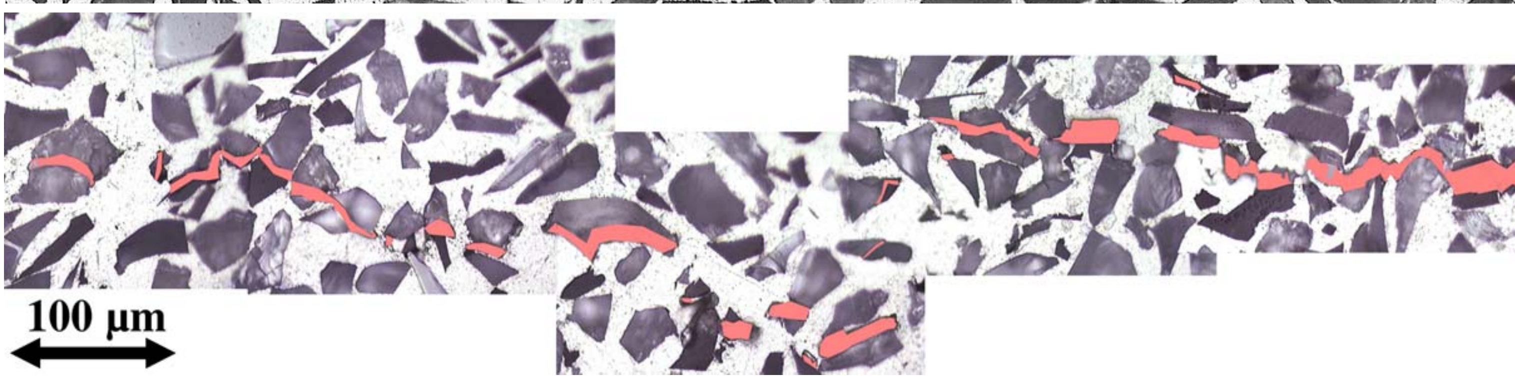
- There is significant *R*-curve behaviour: these *K* values are for near-steady crack advance.

Fracture micromechanisms

Fracture micromechanisms

Particle fracture

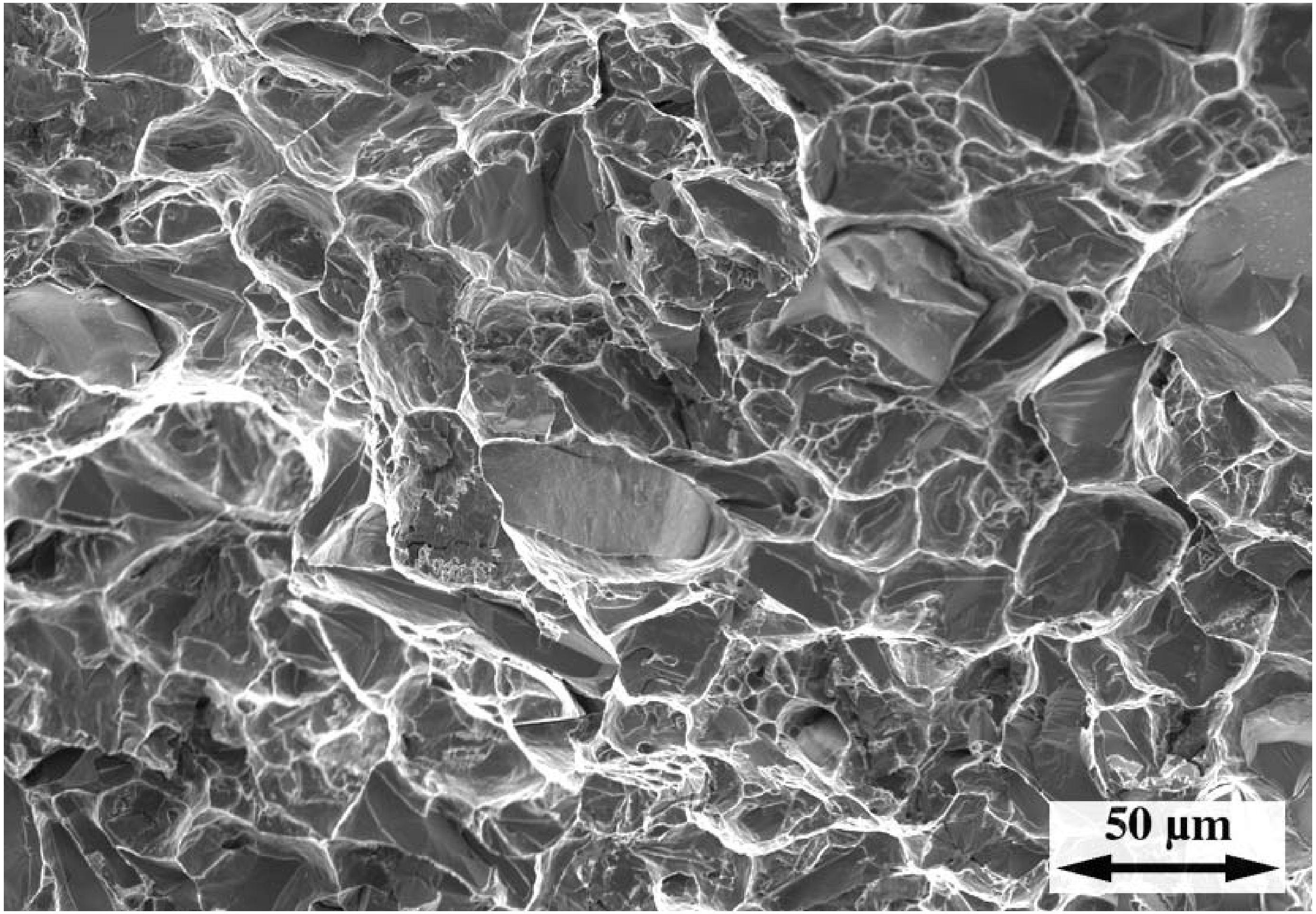




Pure Al/ 30 µm angular Al_2O_3

Fracture micromechanisms

Particle fracture

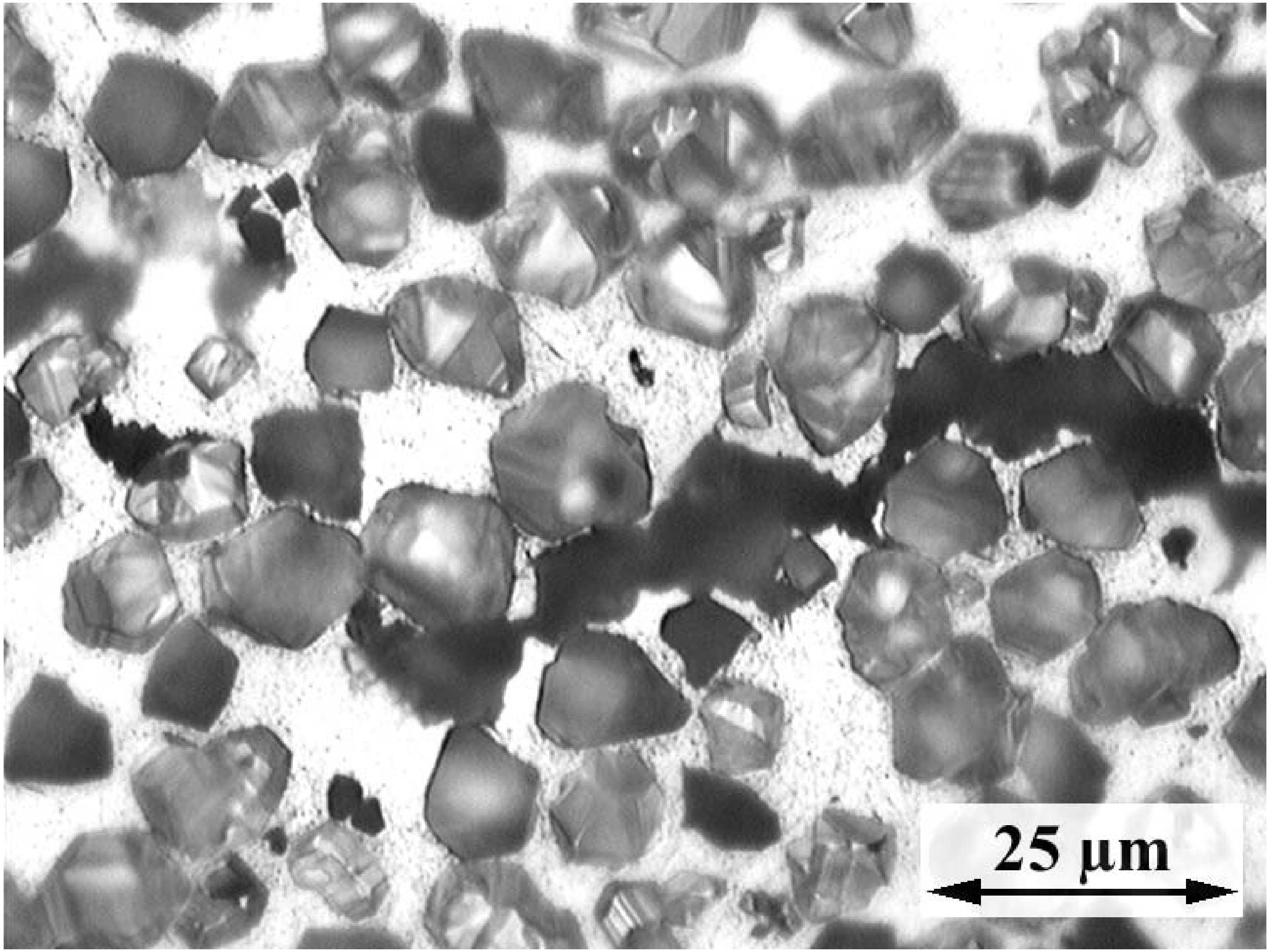


Pure Al/ 30 µm angular Al_2O_3

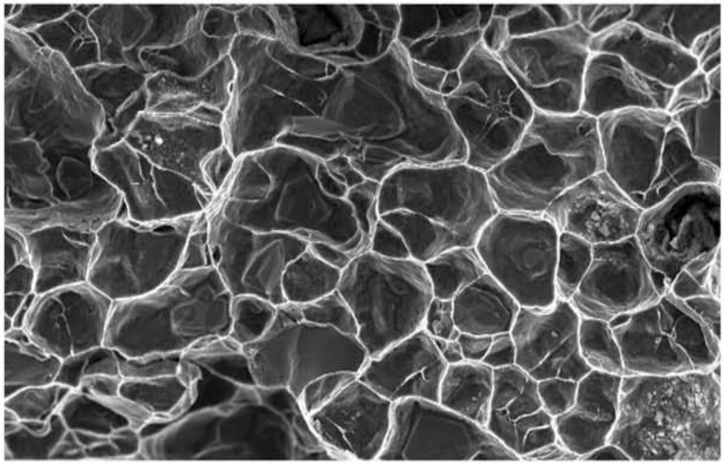
Fracture micromechanisms

Matrix void growth

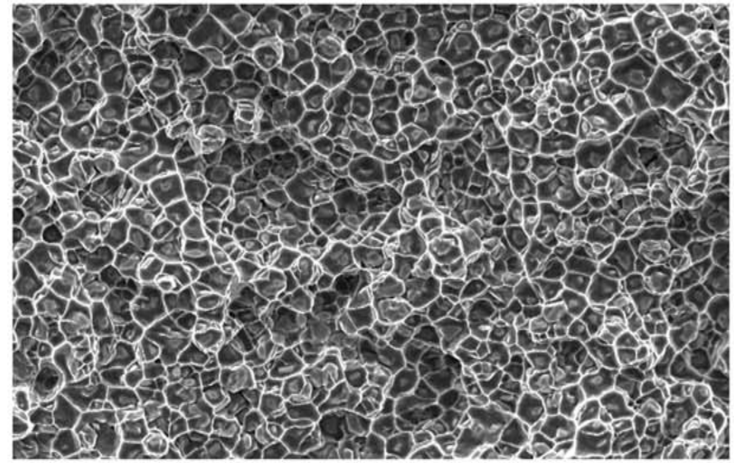
Pure Al/10 μm polygonal Al_2O_3



Fracture micromechanisms

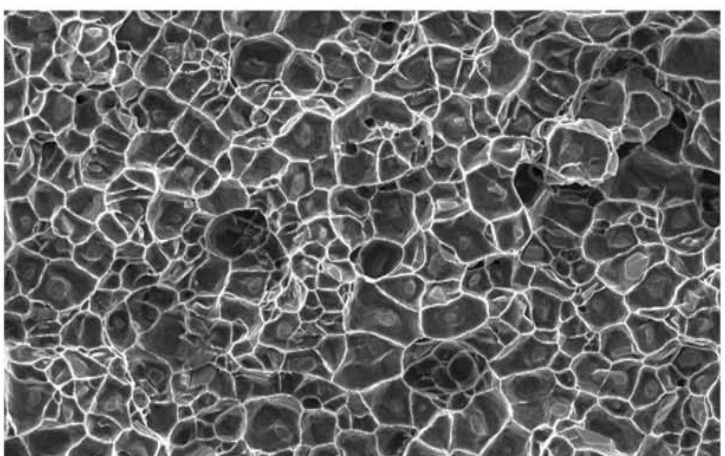


A 18



A 5

20 µm

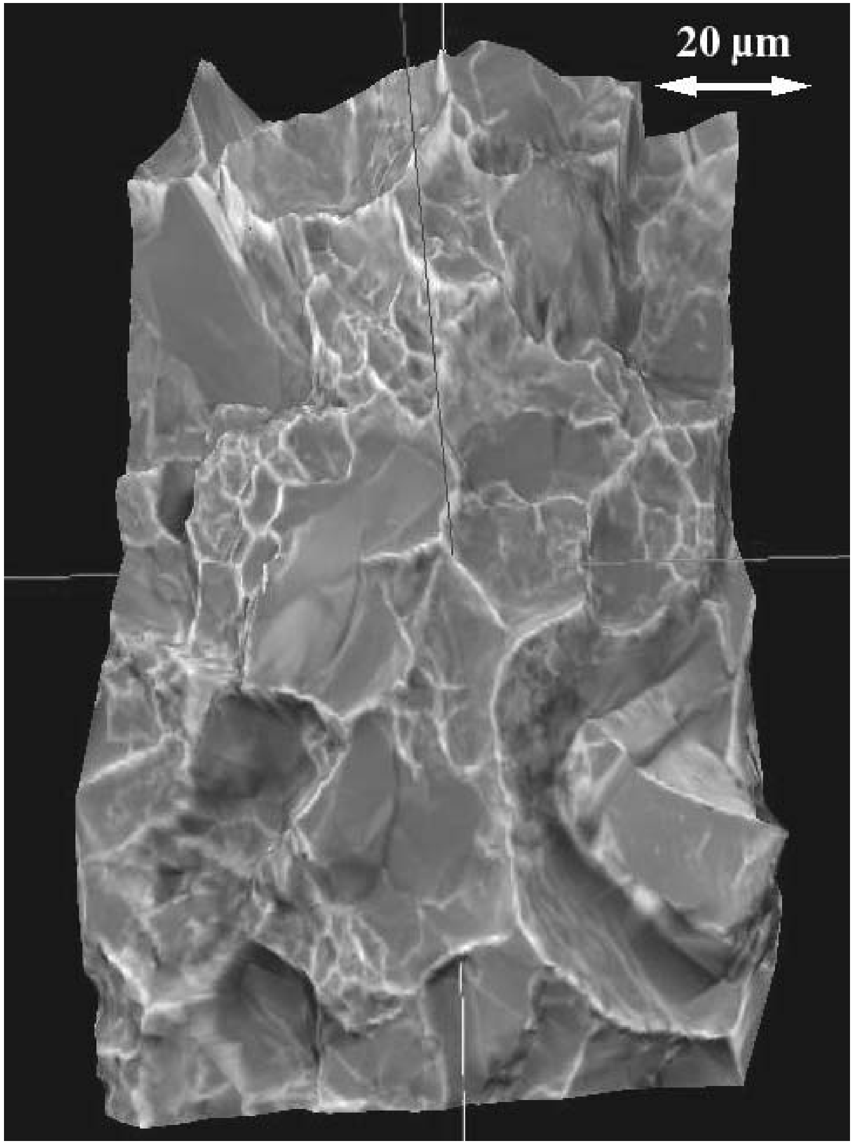


A 10

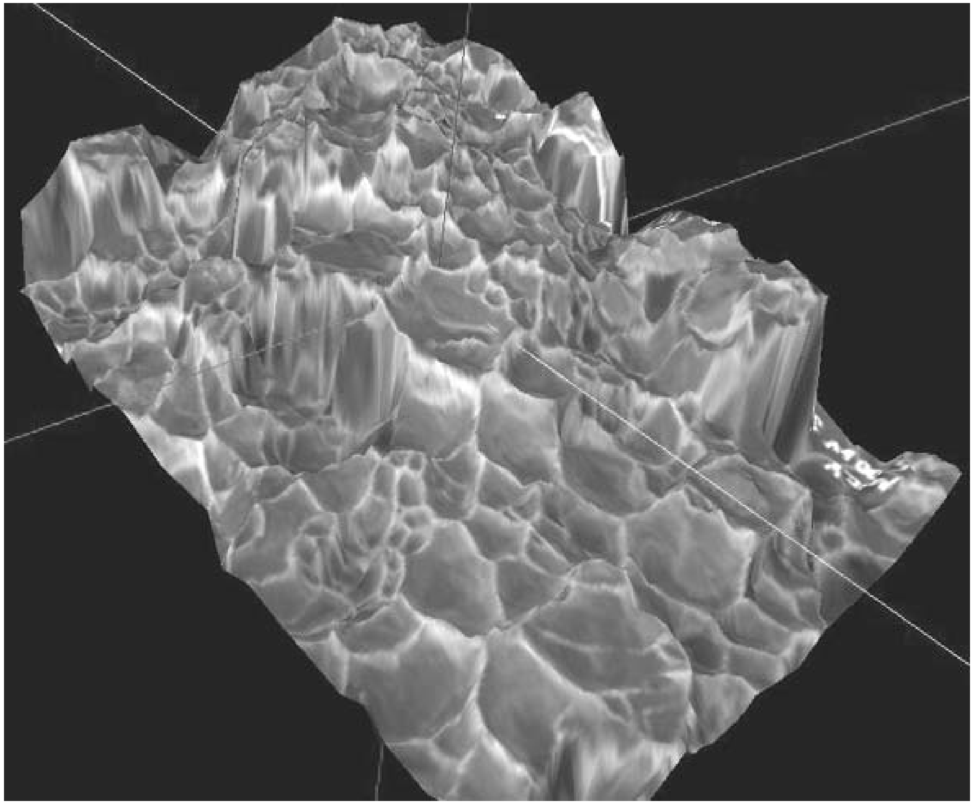
- Voids nucleate between particles
- Final void size scales with average particle size

Local fracture energy estimation

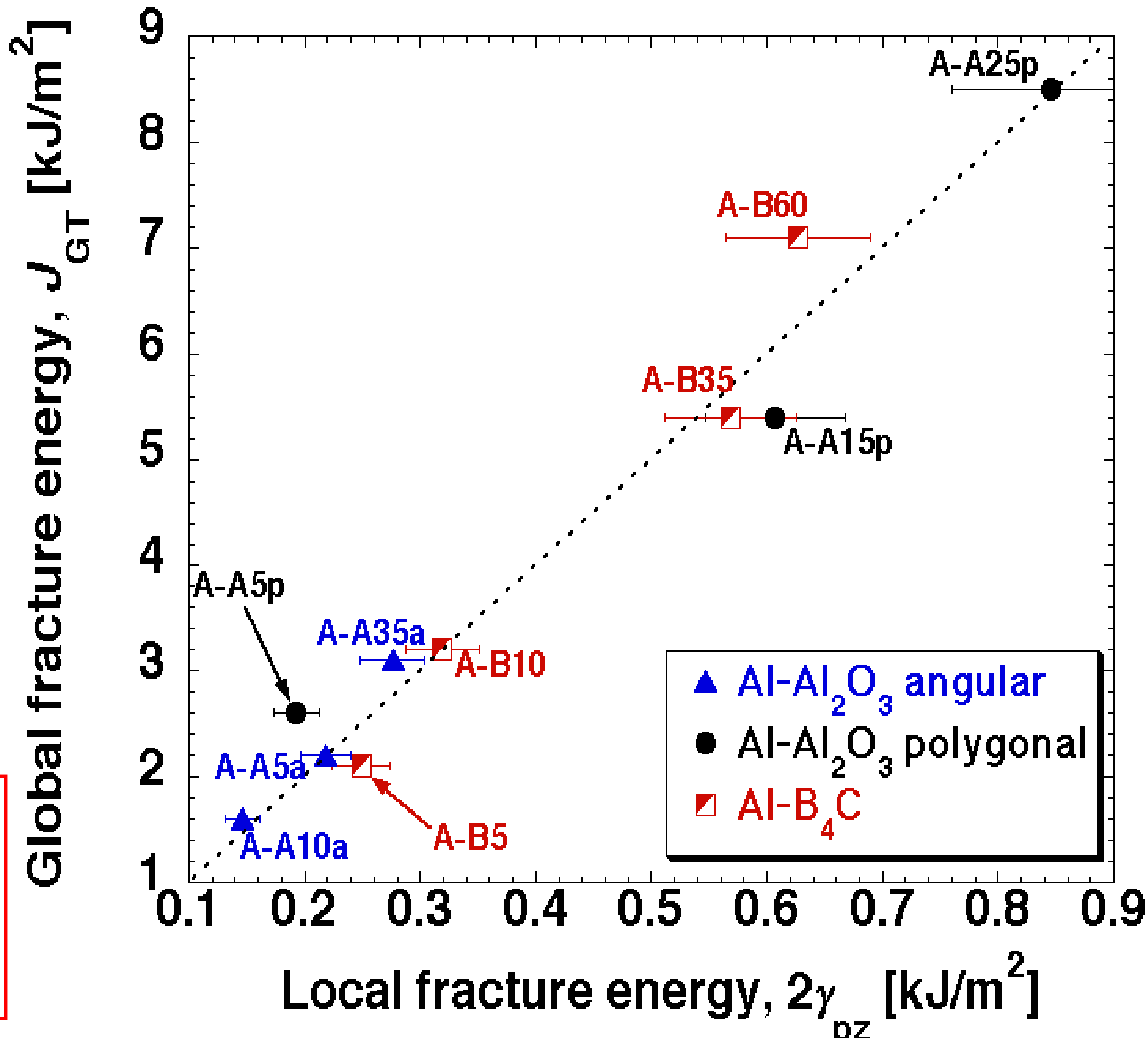
Local fracture energy estimation



Pure Al composites: 3-D fracture surface topography measurement



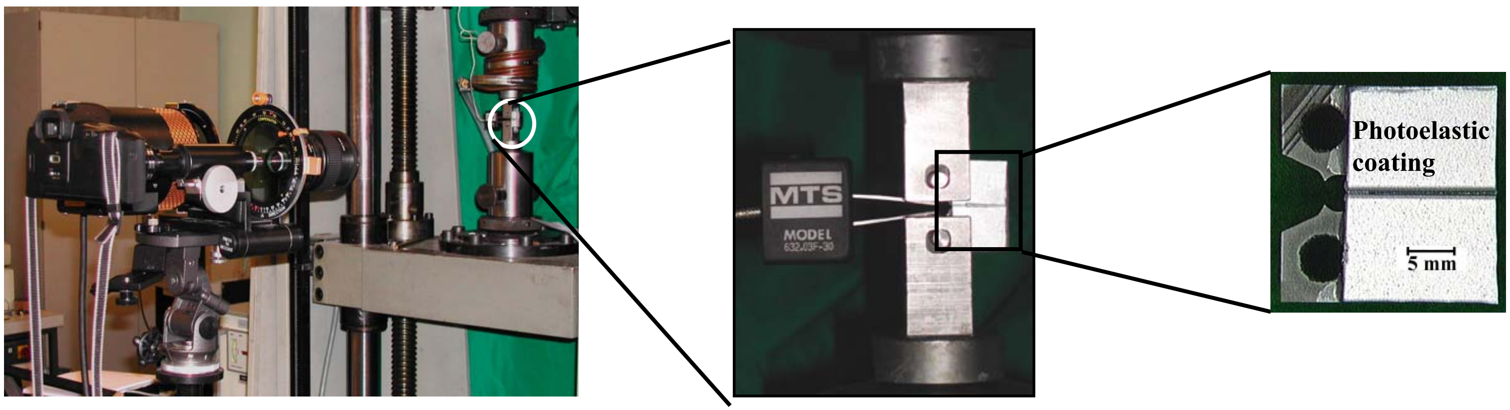
Local vs. total fracture energy

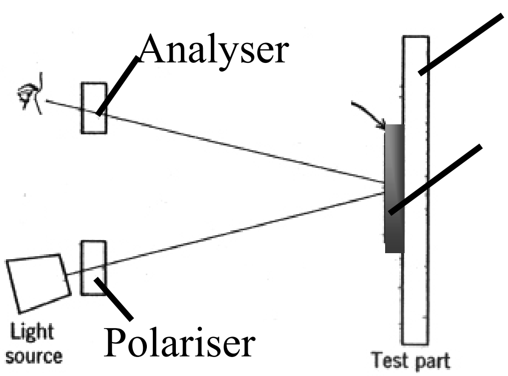


Pure Al matrix composites

Toughening mechanisms

Observation of crack tip plasticity using a photoelastic coating:

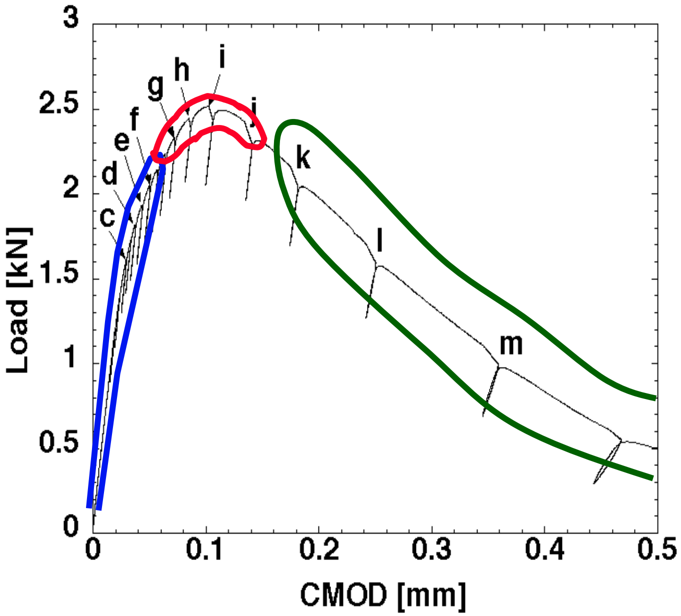


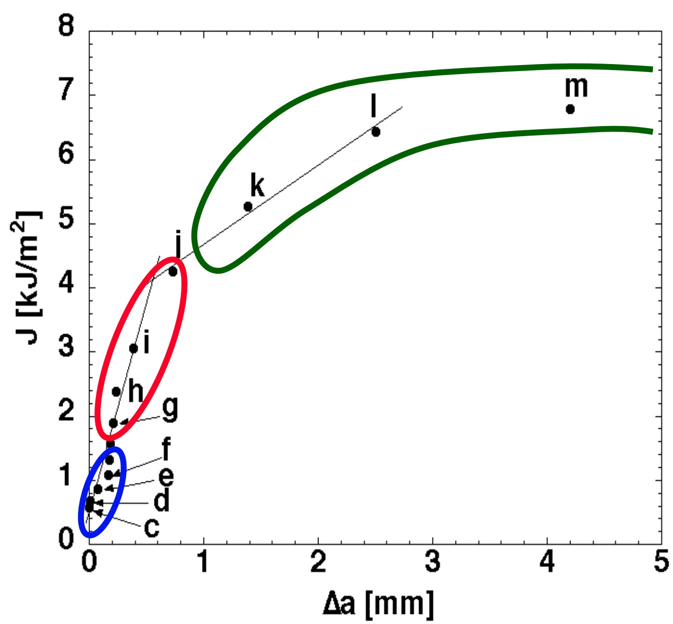


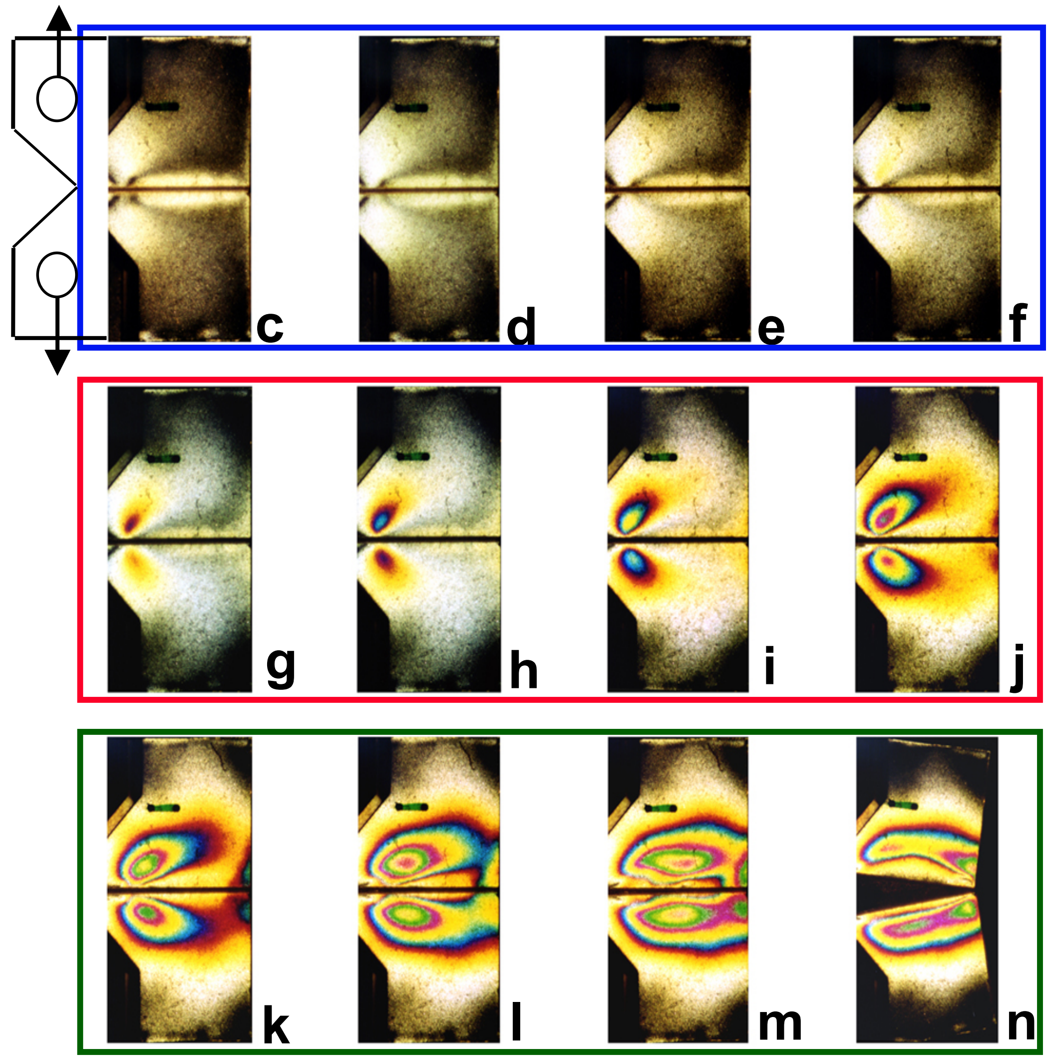
$\varepsilon_1 - \varepsilon_2 \approx 0.2\%$:

pale yellow - orange fringes

Toughening mechanisms







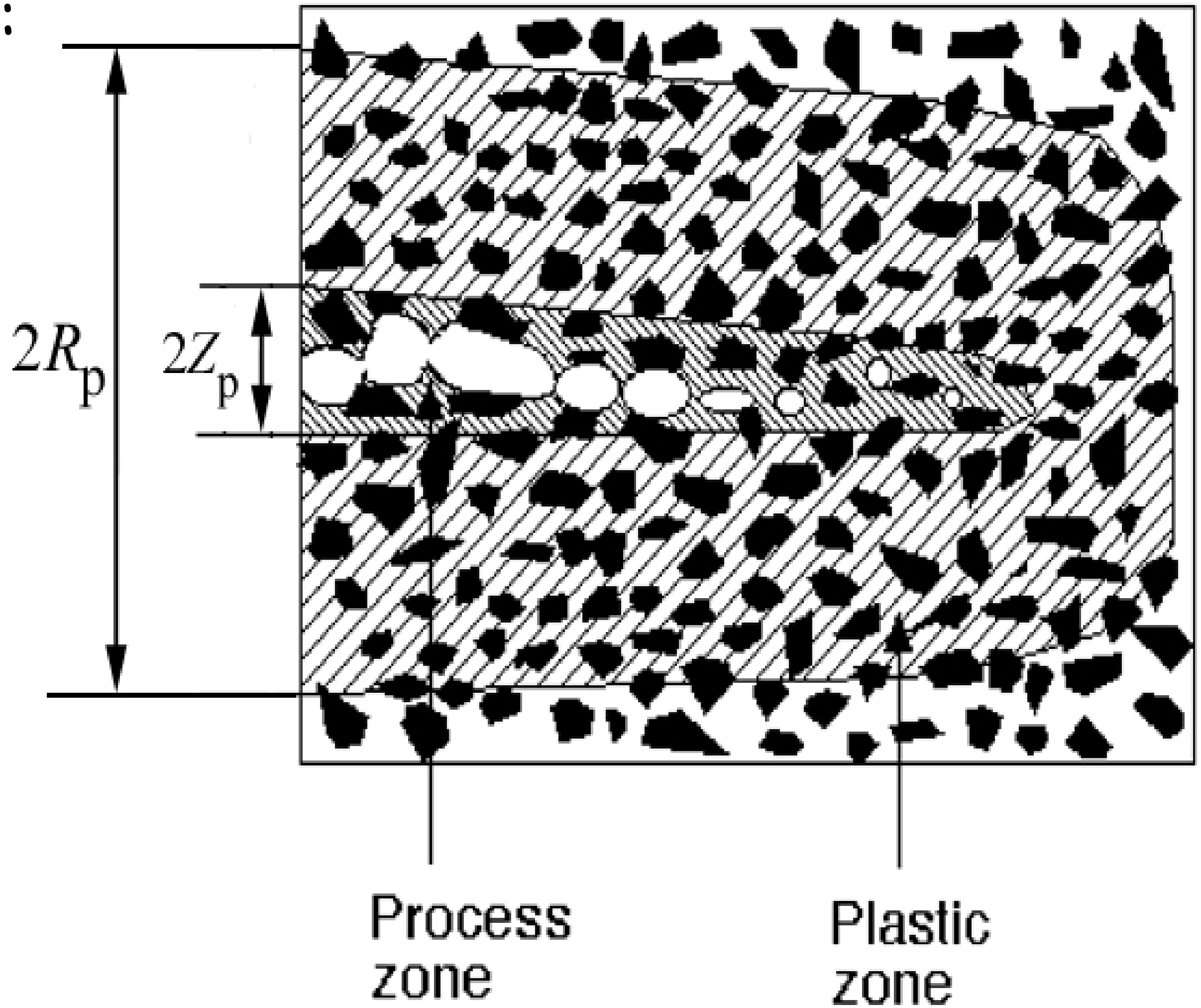
(Al/35 μm ang. Al_2O_3)

Local vs. total fracture energy

In other words, the total fracture energy:
$J = 2\gamma_{pz} + W_p > 2\gamma_{pz}$

- $2\ \gamma_{pz}$ is the *local* « process zone » or « cohesive law » fracture energy;

- W_p is the energy dissipated in the surrounding macroscopic plastic zone



Toughening mechanisms

Tvergaard and Hutchinson (*JMPS* vol. 40 (1992) 1377)

Cohesive Zone Model :

V. Tvergaard and J. W. Hutchinson

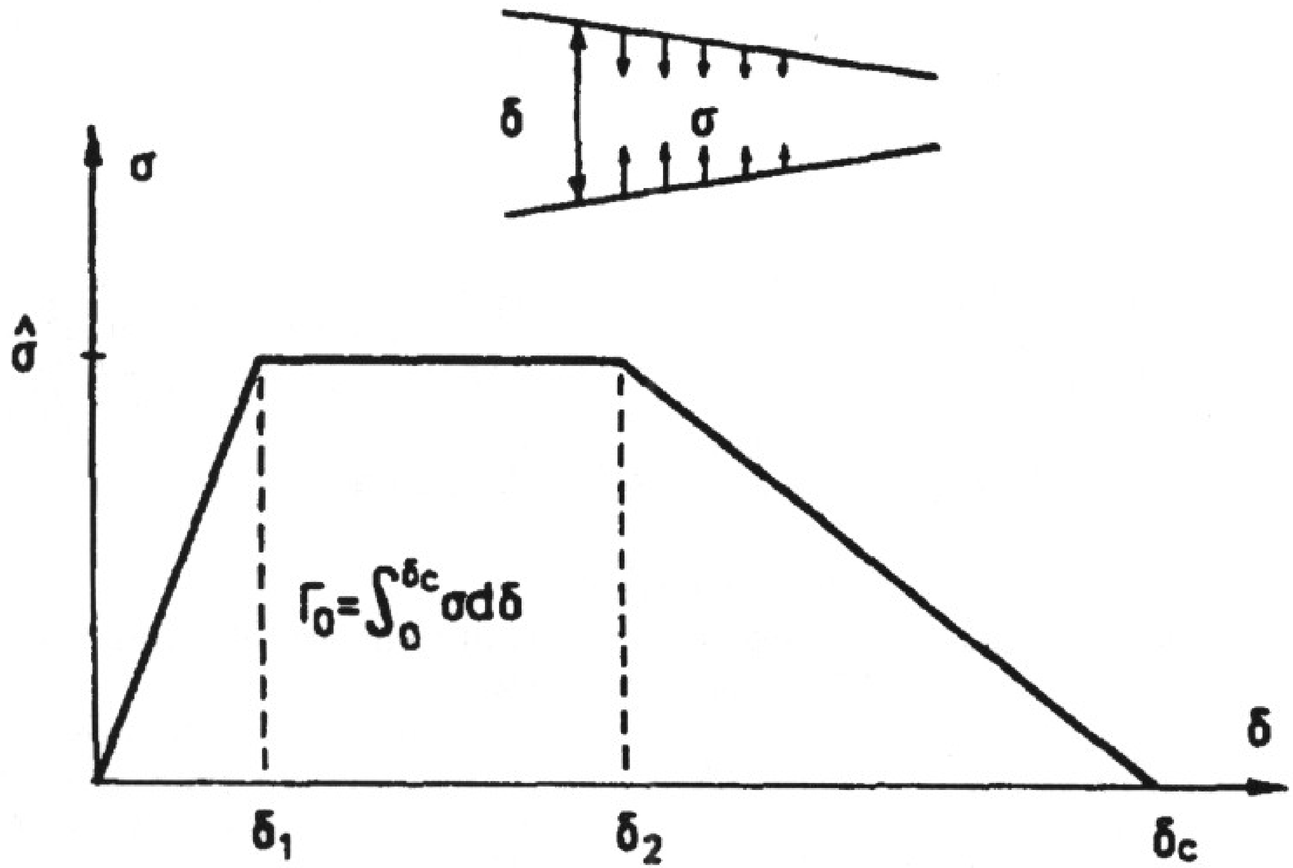
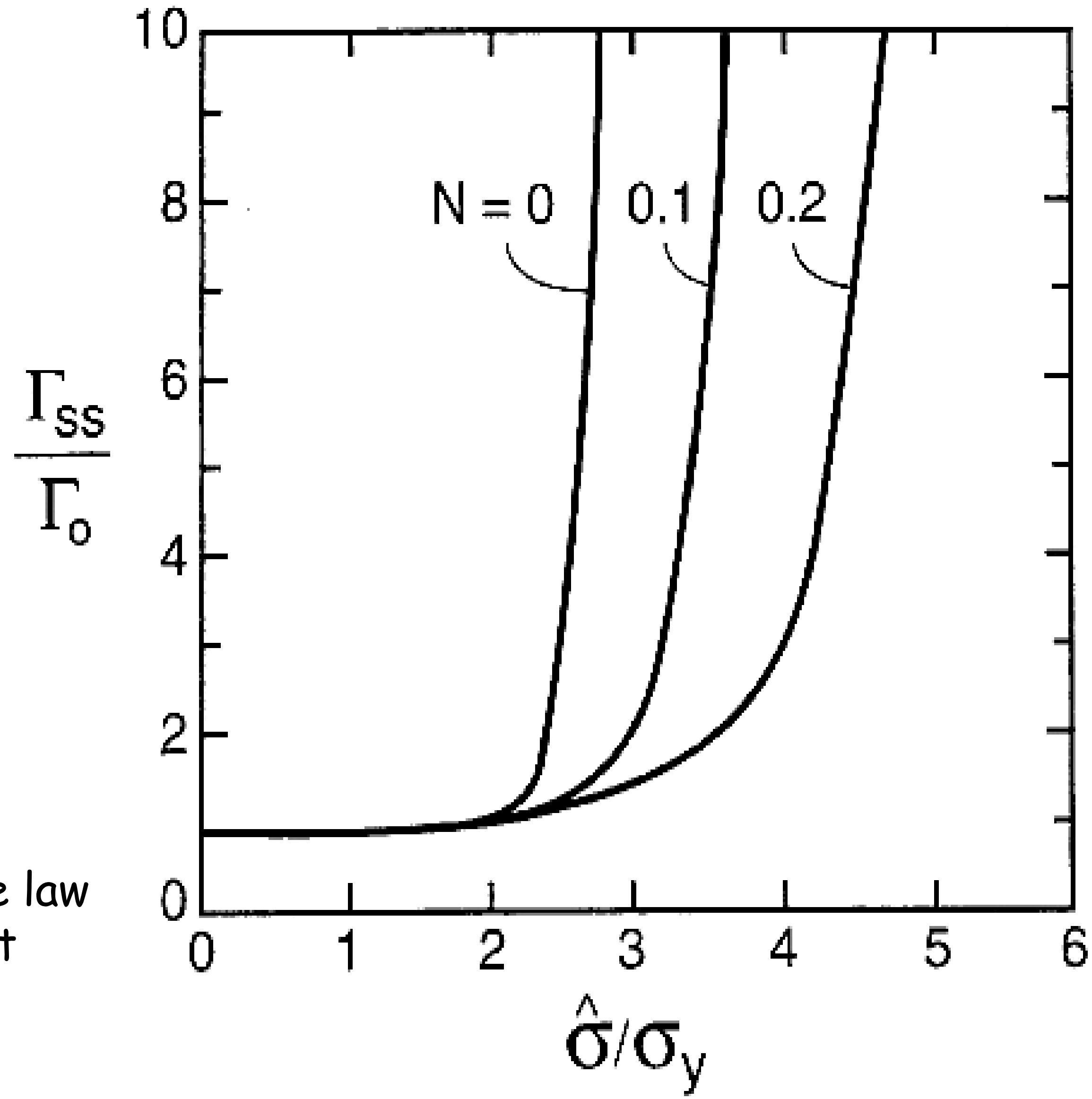


Fig. 1. Traction–separation relation for fracture process.

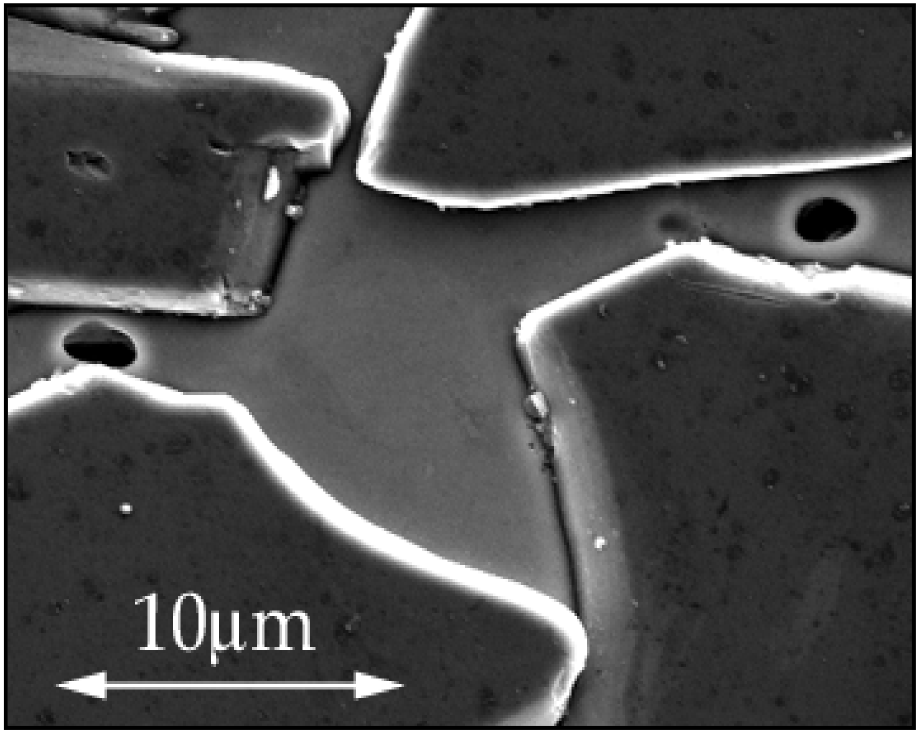
Toughening mechanisms

Tvergaard and Hutchinson
(*JMPS* vol. 40 (1992) 1377):



Γ_{ss}: steady-state toughness
Γ_0: local fracture energy ($2\gamma_{pz}$)
σ_y: composite yield strength
$\hat{\sigma}$: peak-stress of the cohesive law
N: strain-hardening coefficient

Toughening mechanisms



V. Tvergaard, Comput. Mechan. 20 (1997) 186

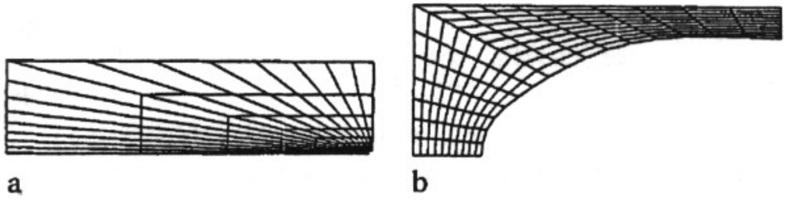


Fig. 7a,b. Meshes at two stages of deformation for $\sigma_y/E = 0.003, n = 10, H_0/B_0 = 0.25$ and $R_0/B_0 = 0.01$. **a** Initial mesh; **b** $\epsilon_1 = 0.522$ and $V/V_0 = 2.50 \cdot 10^5$

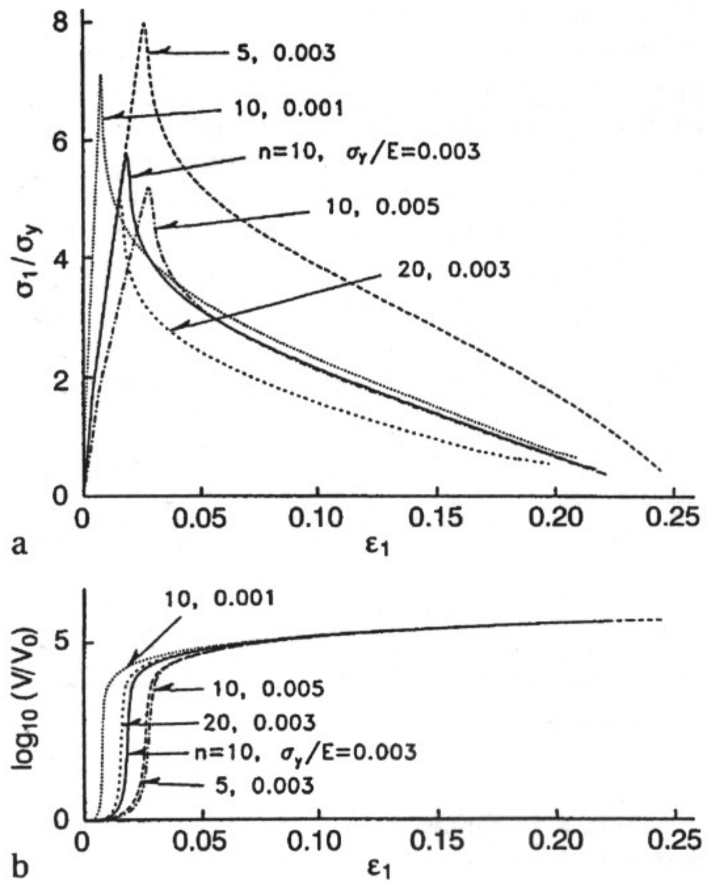
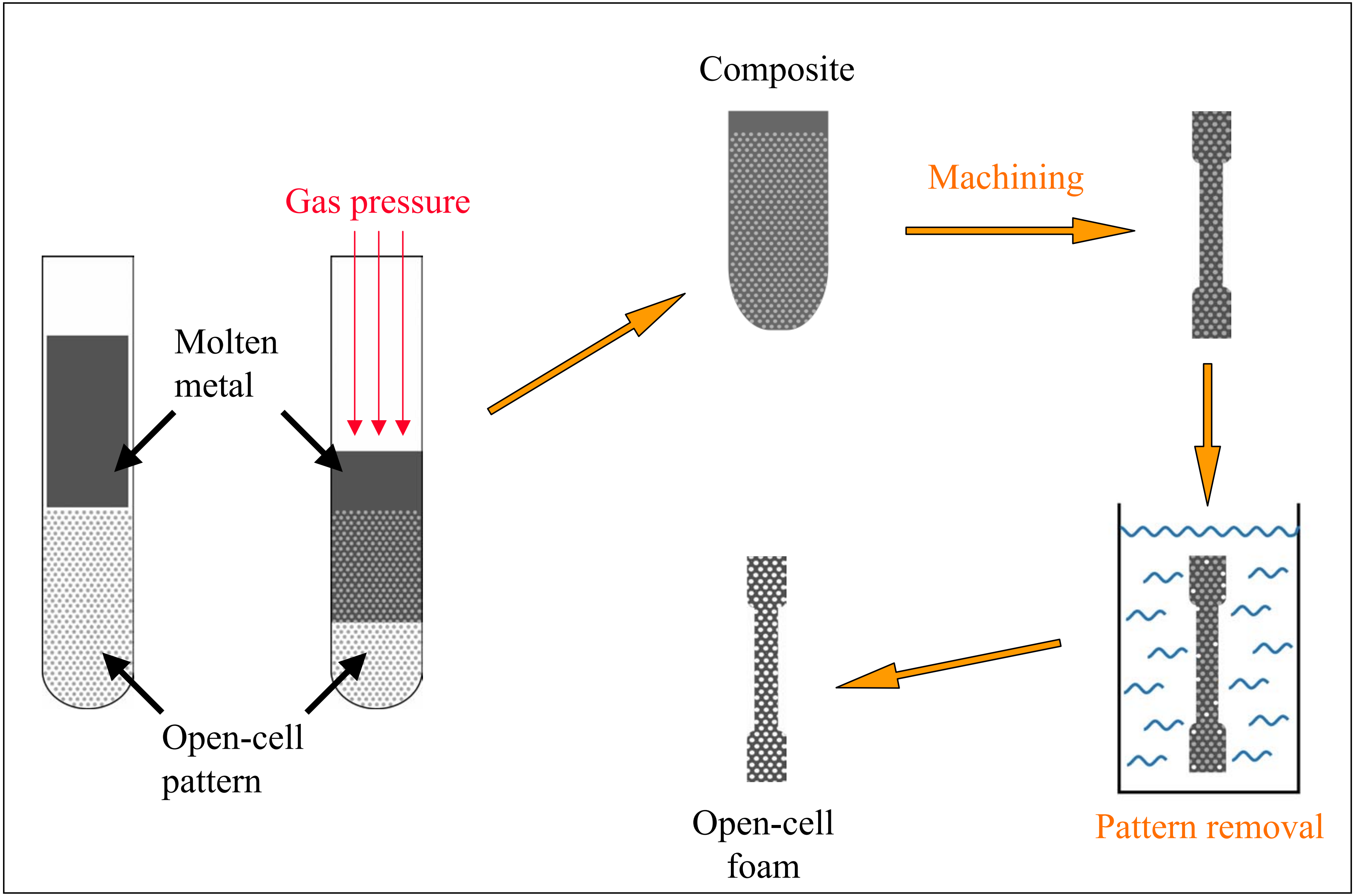


Fig. 8. Average true stress and void volume growth vs. average logarithmic strain, for $H_0/B_0 = 1$ and $R_0/B_0 = 0.01$. With remeshing

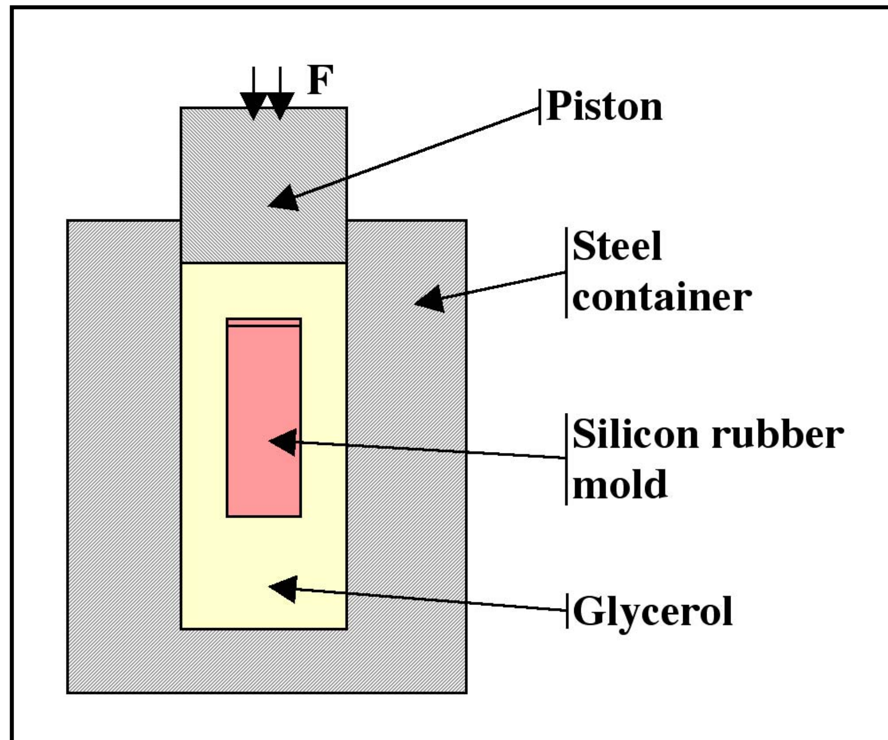
Metal sponge

The replication process

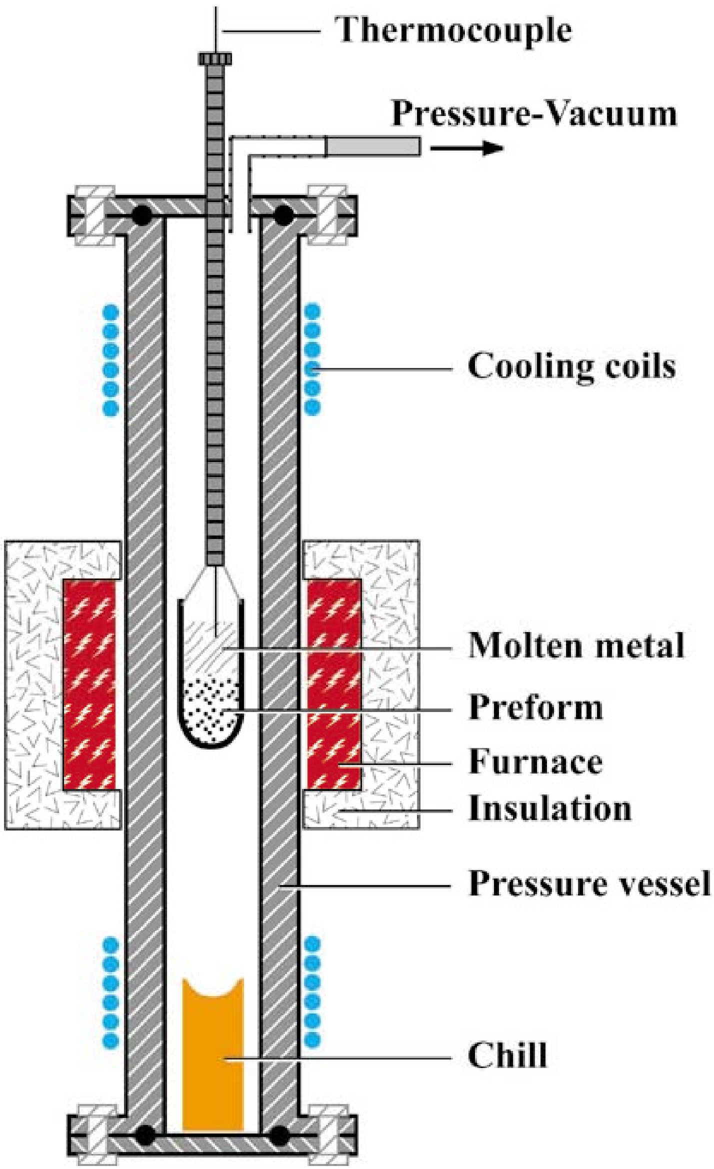


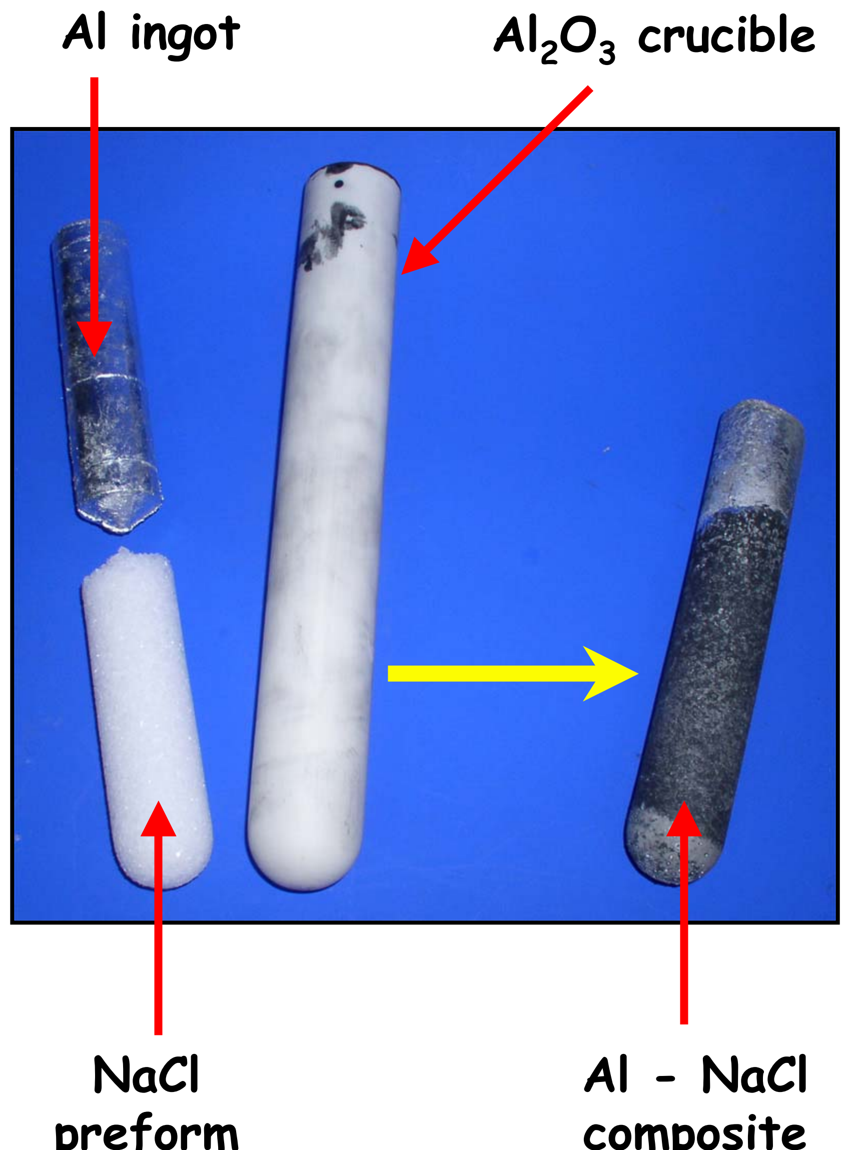
The replication process

Cold Isostatic Pressing (CIP) + sintering for 40 μm (32-45 μm) powder: 45 min. at 750°C.



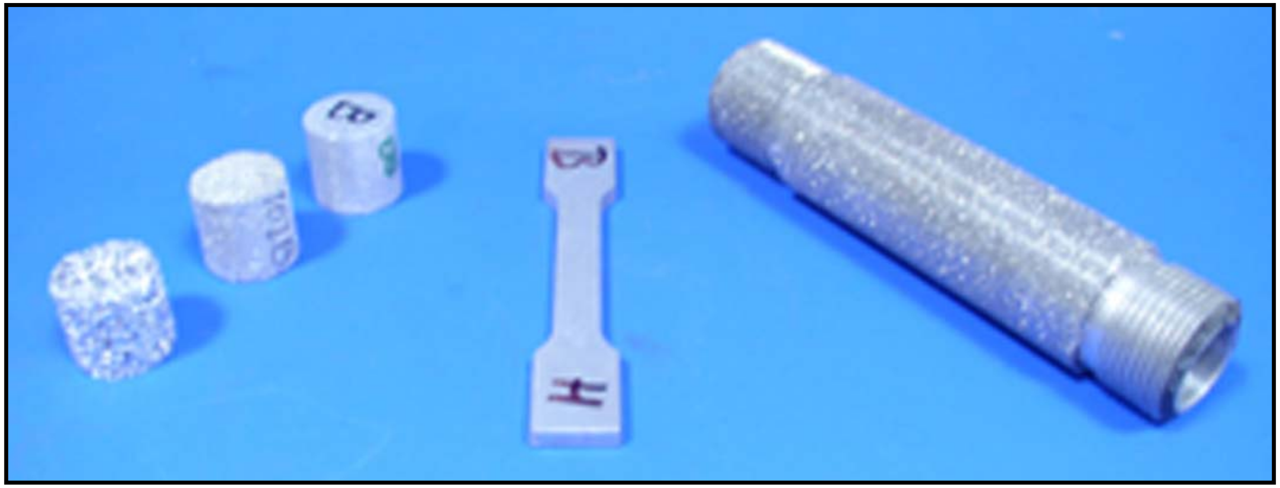
The replication process





The replication process

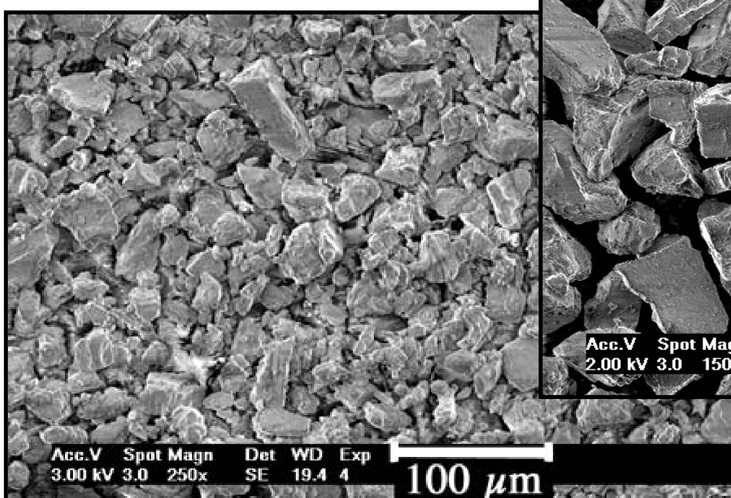
Machining:
conducted prior to salt removal by dissolution on the (brittle) NaCl-Al composite;
Dissolution:
- **in distilled water.**
- **below 50 μm,** degassed water with forminggas (H_2 + N_2) bubbling(to minimize corrosion problems)



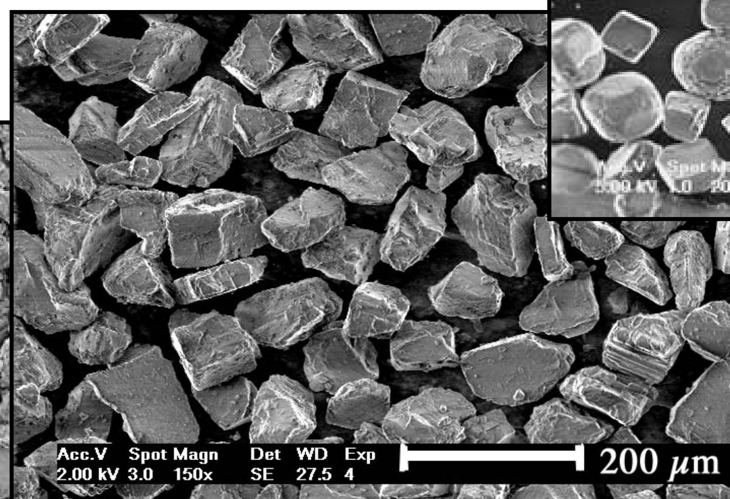
The replication process

Commercial NaCl powder, sieved to:

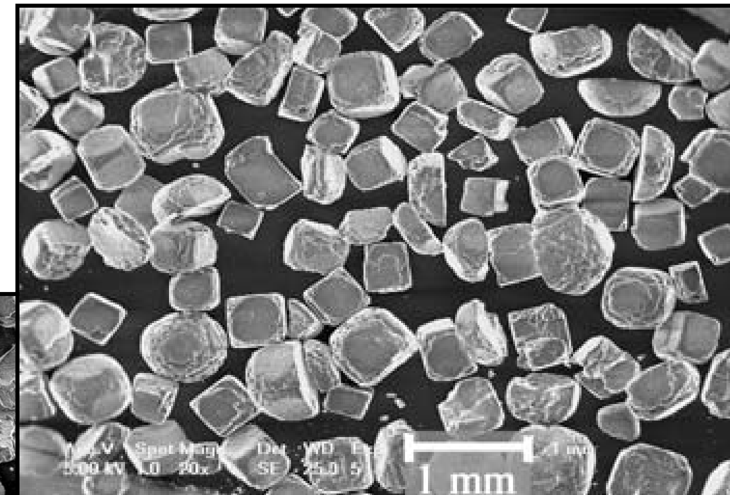
- 32-45 μm (40 μm);
- 63-90 μm (75 μm);
- >250 μm (ave. 400μm).



Sieving 32-45 μm

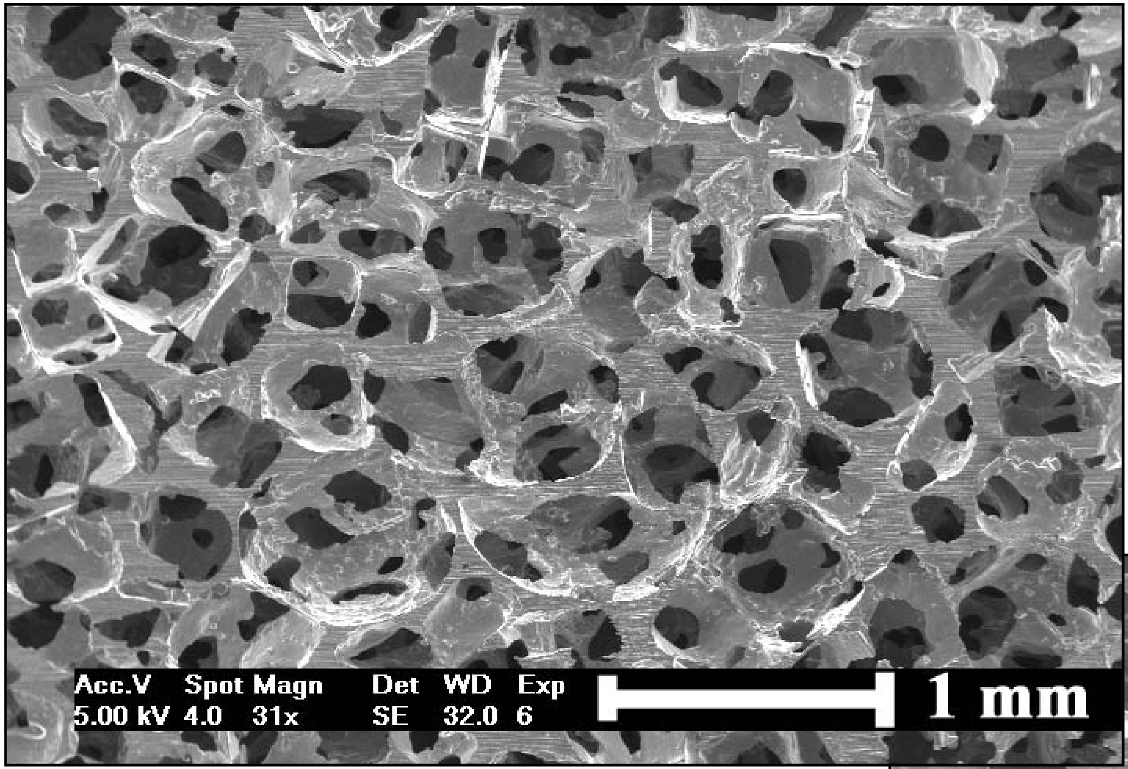


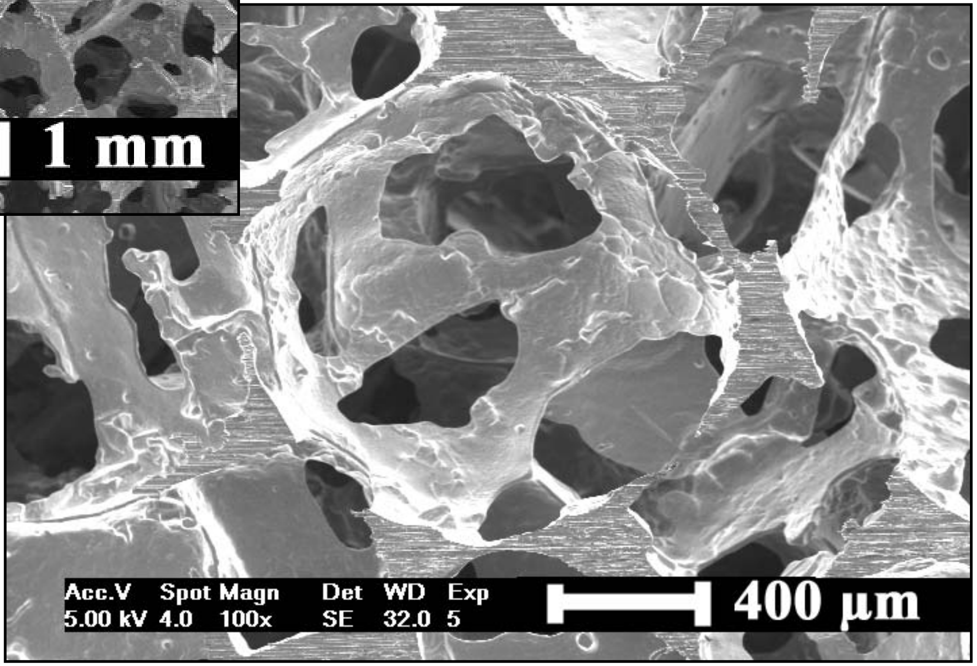
Sieving 63 - 90 μm



Sieving > 250 μm

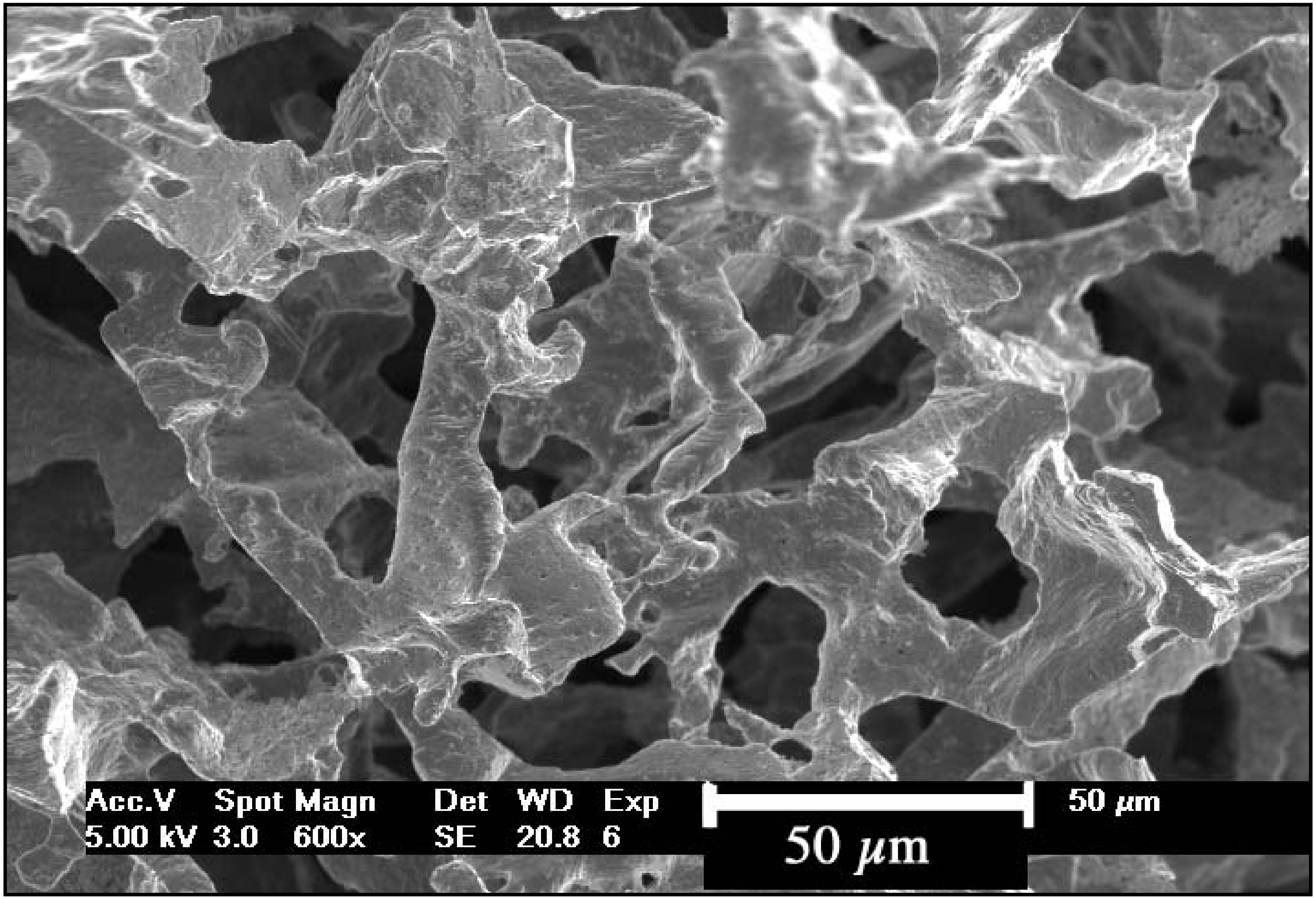
Replicated Foams





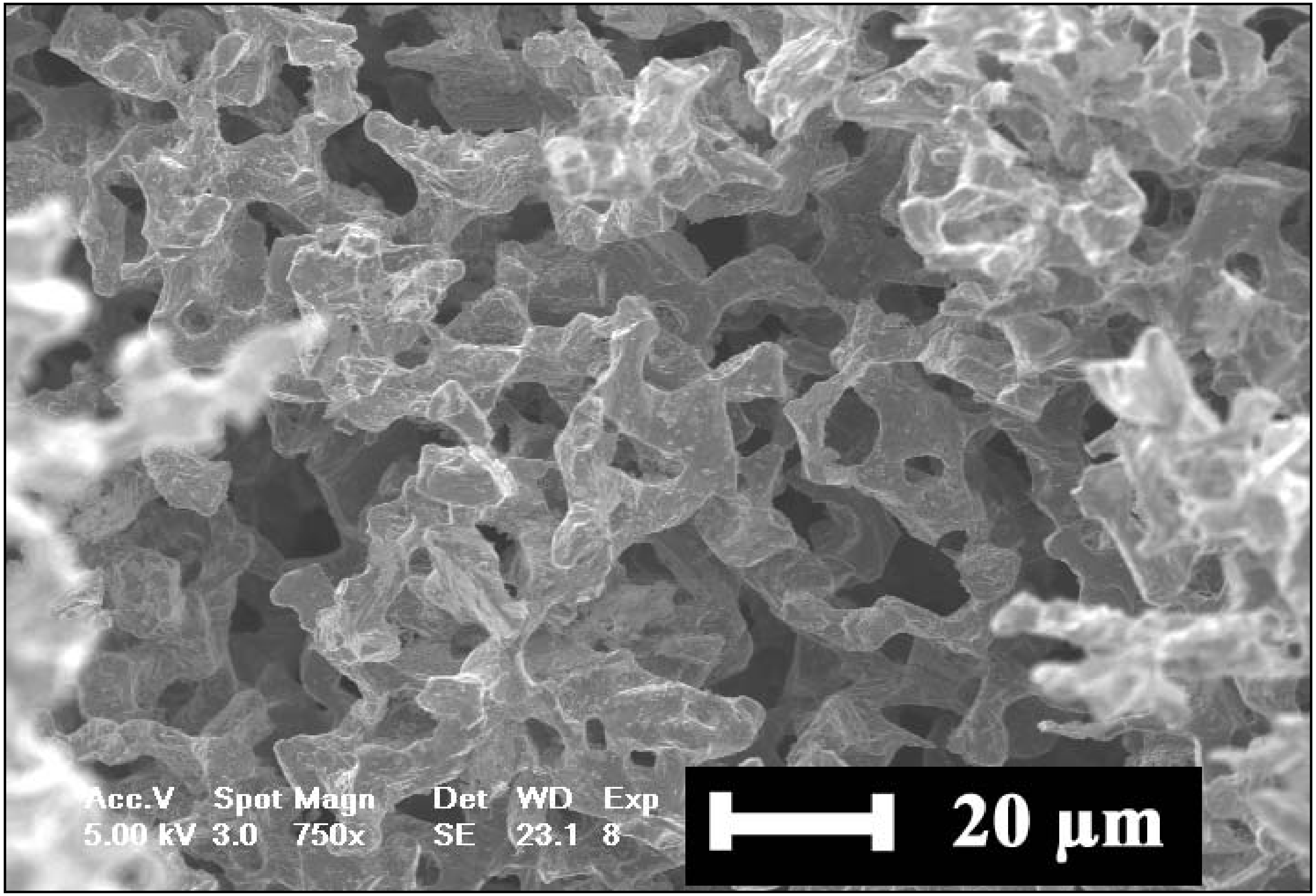
NaCl 400 µm ,
V_f Al = 16 %

Replicated Foams



75 µm, Vf Al = 16 % (fracture surface)

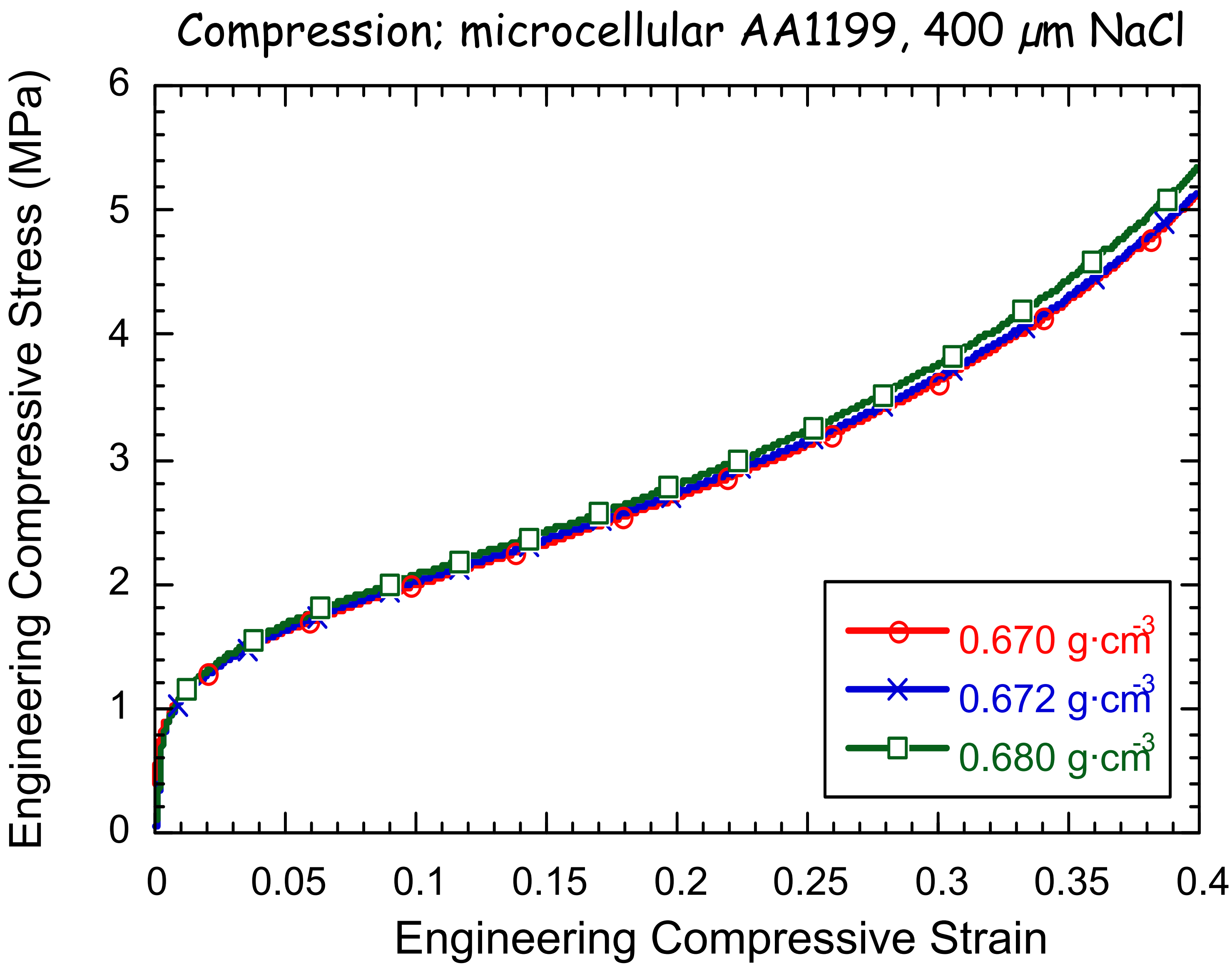
Replicated Foams



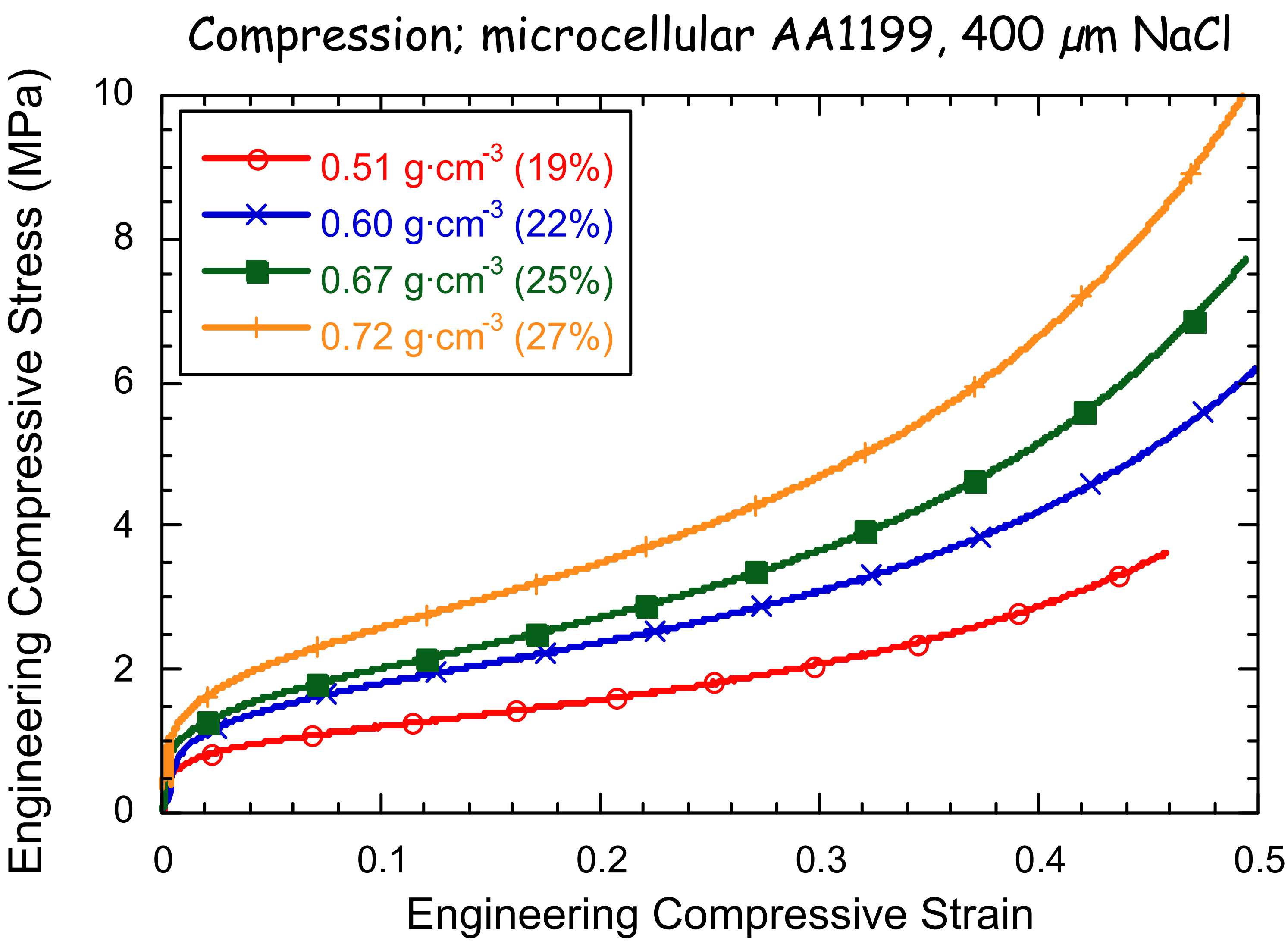
NaCl 20-32 μm , Vf Al = 18 % (fracture surface)

Mechanical Properties

Mechanical Properties

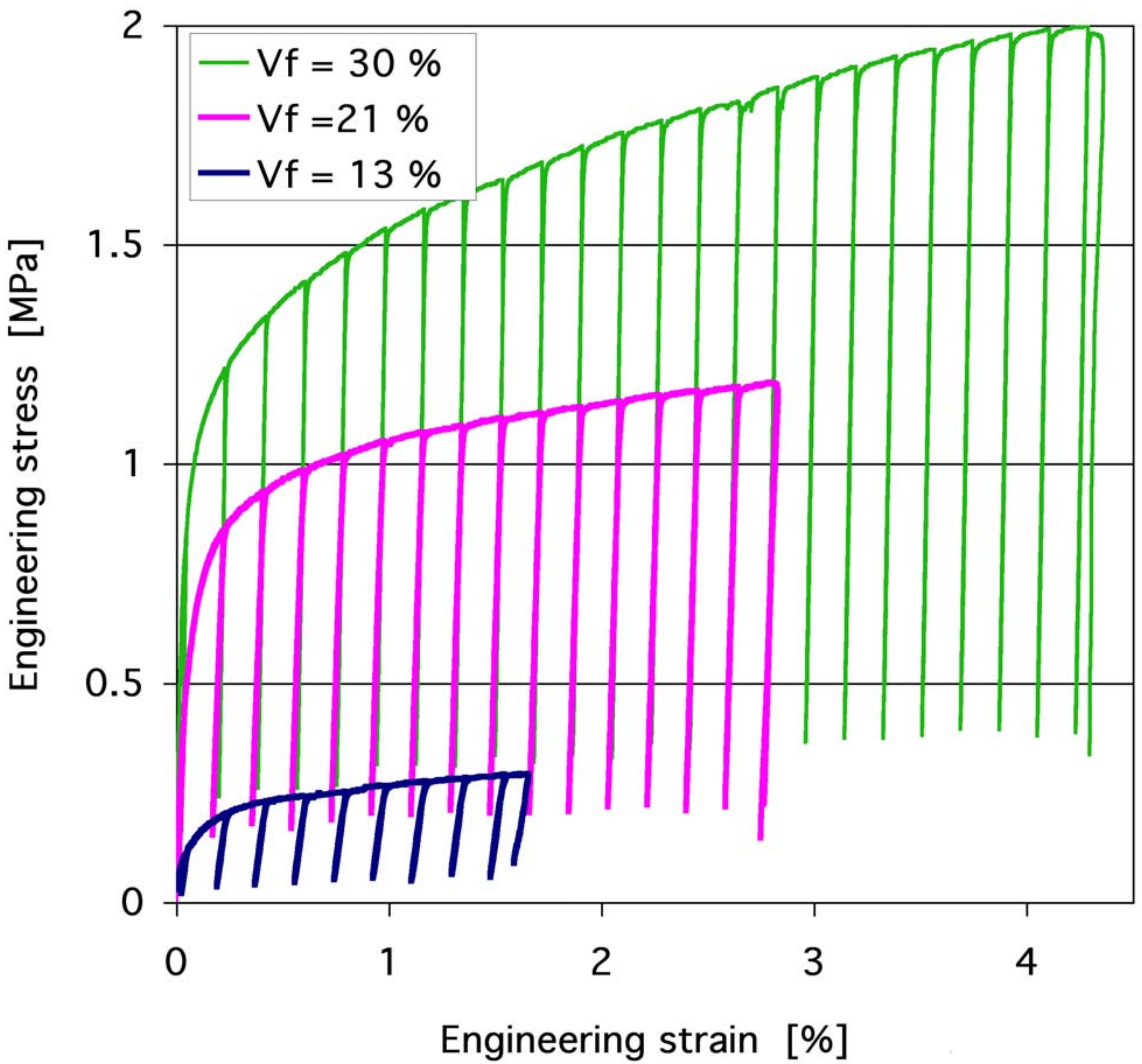


Influence of Density



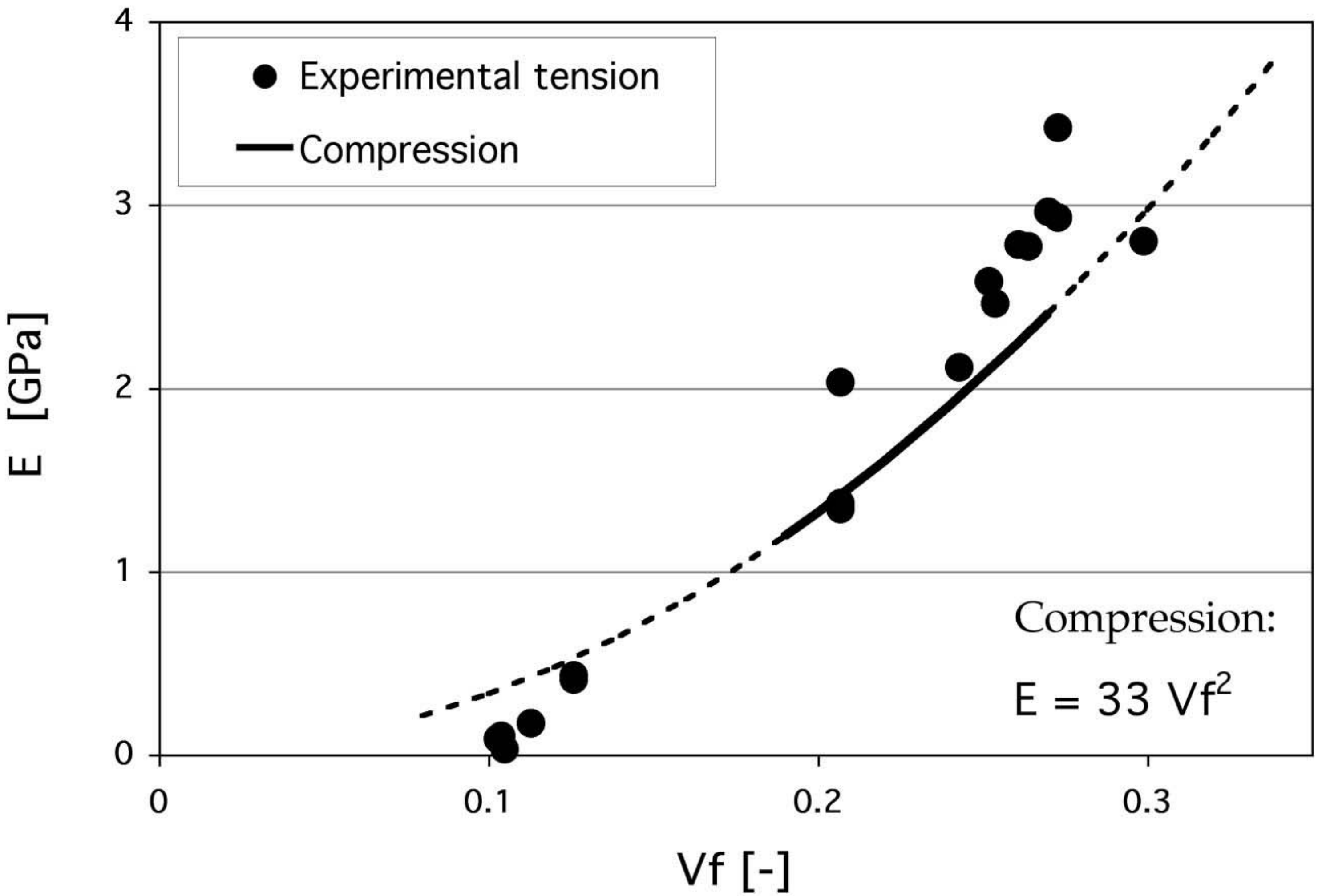
Influence of Density

Tension; microcellular AA1199, 400 μm NaCl



Influence of Density

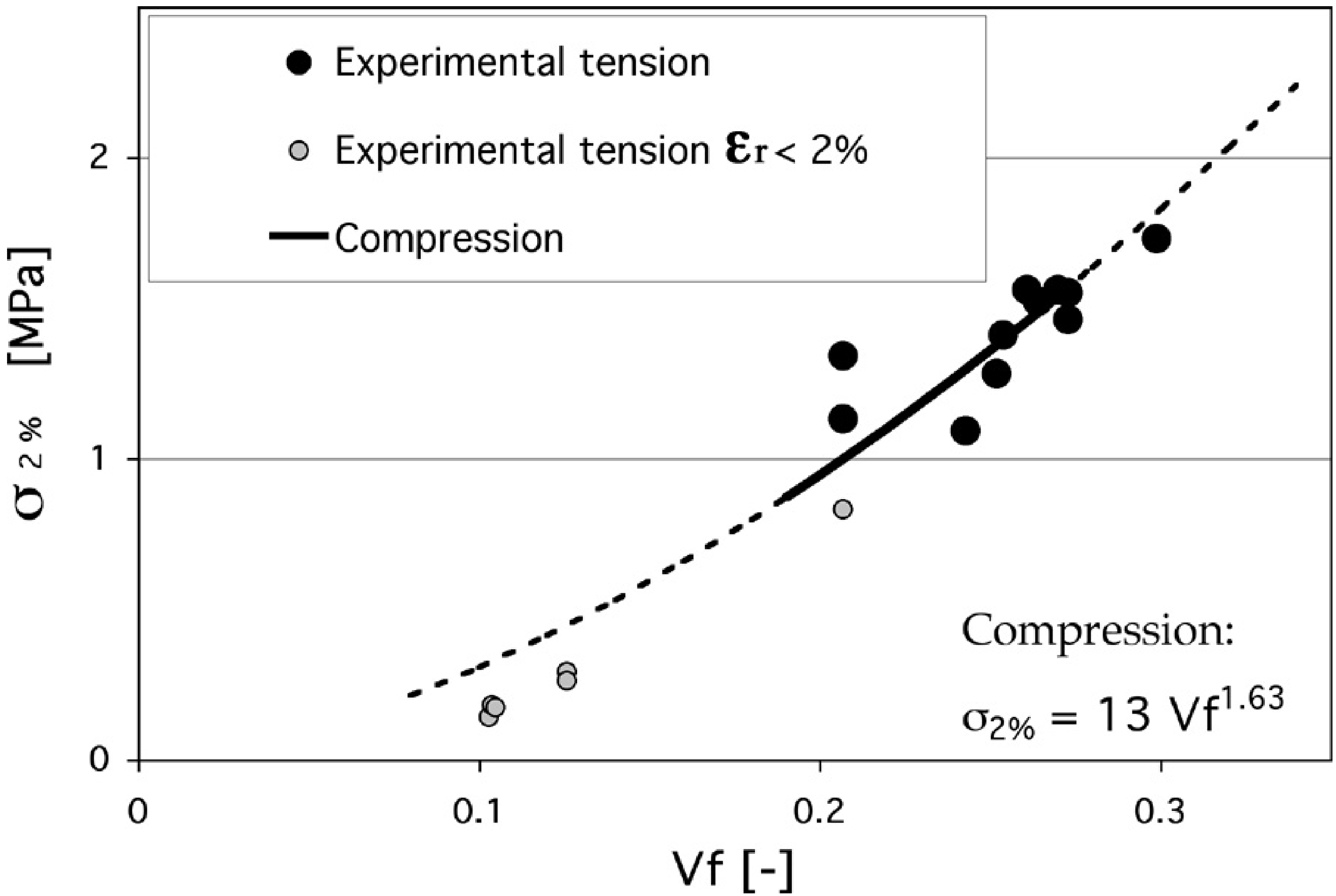
Evolution of E_0 with Vf_{Al}, 400 μm NaCl



[*Acta Materialia*, 49 (19) 3959-3969 (2001); Proc. MetFoam 2003]

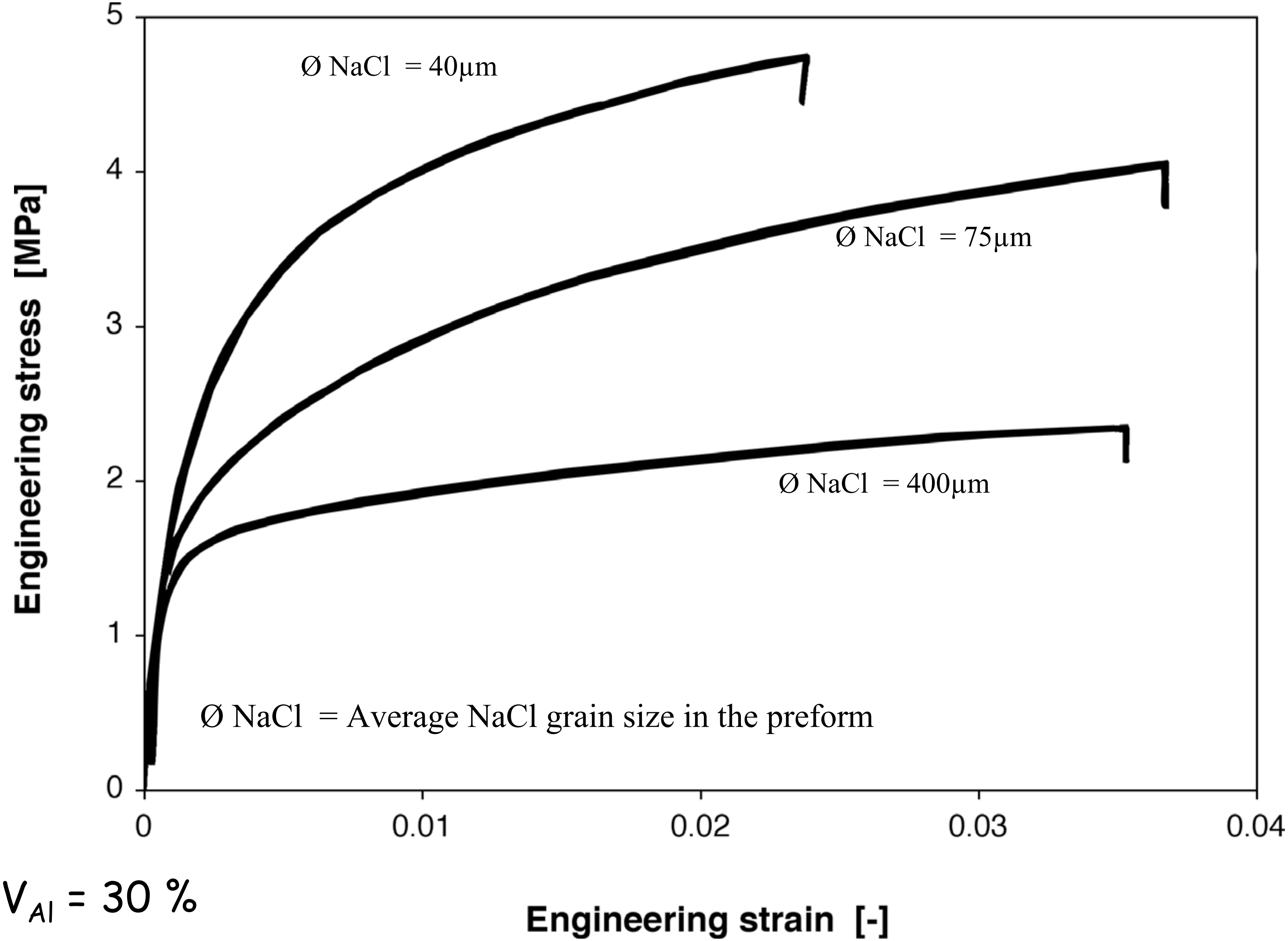
Influence of Density

Evolution of $\sigma_{2\%}$ with Vf_{Al}, 400 μm NaCl



[*Acta Materialia*, 49 (19) 3959-3969 (2001); Proc. MetFoam 2003]

Size Effect



V_{Al} = 30 %

Size Effect

Sources of hardening at small cell sizes:

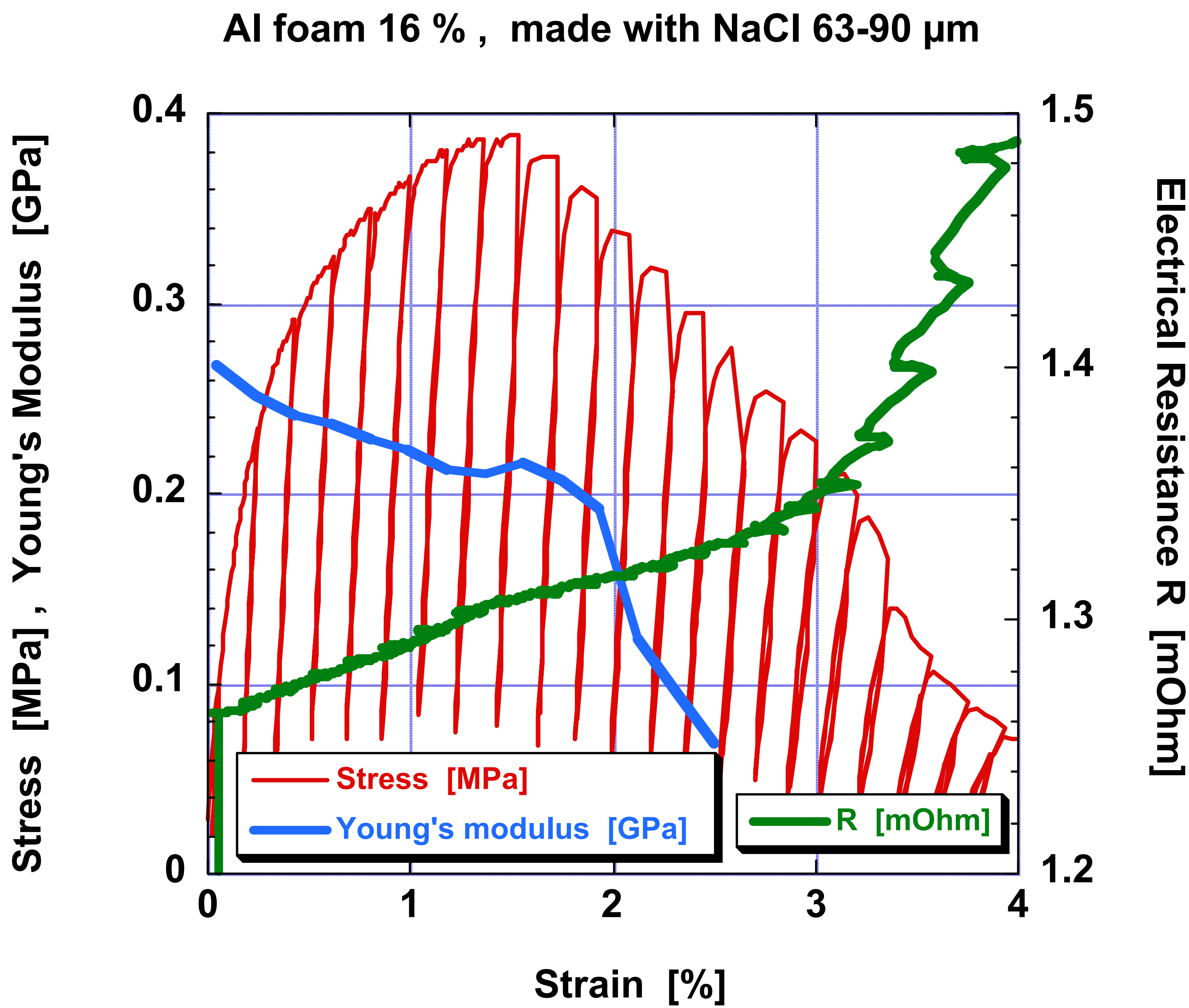
• Geometrically necessary dislocations when cooling after infiltration

$CTE_{Al} = 23.6 \cdot 10^{-6}$ [K^{-1}]

$CTE_{NaCl} = 44 \cdot 10^{-6}$ [K^{-1}]

• Oxidation during salt dissolution (hydroxide formation)

Damage



Al foam 16 % , made with NaCl 63-90 µm
Stress [MPa] , Young's Modulus [GPa]
0.4
0.3
0.2
0.1
0
0
1
2
3
4
Strain [%]
1.5
1.4
1.3
1.2
Electrical Resistance R [mOhm]
Stress [MPa]
Young's modulus [GPa]
R [mOhm]

Damage

Before necking, E decreases with e while R increases linearly with e.

This implies damage build-up during foam tensile deformation:
(the modulus would otherwise increase),

taking the form of foam strut tensile deformation and failure
(since the resistance increases linearly with strain before the peak).

Damage

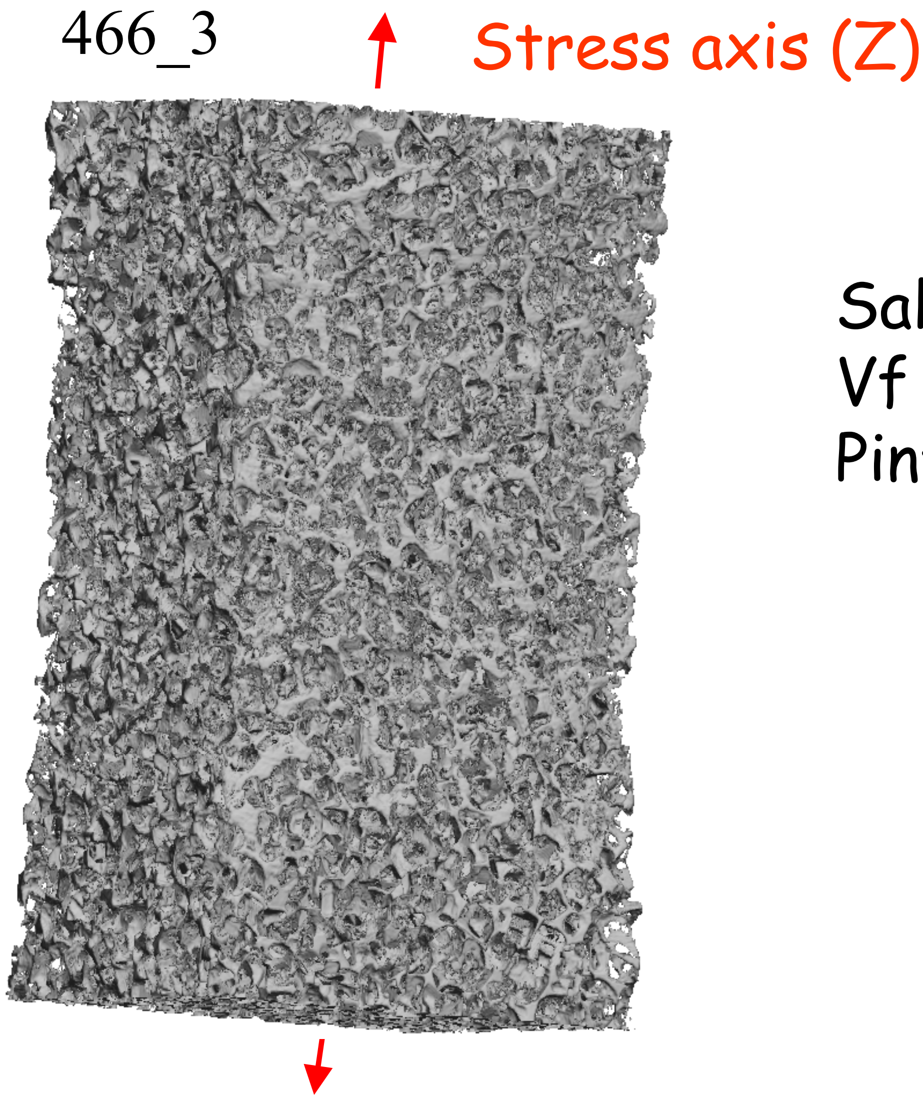
Visualisation by X-Ray Microtomography:

At ESRF, in collaboration with:

- Ariane Marmottant, Luc Salvo, Rémy Dendiével
(INPG Grenoble, France)

- Eric Maire
(INSA Lyon, France)

Tensile test coupled with X-ray Microtomography

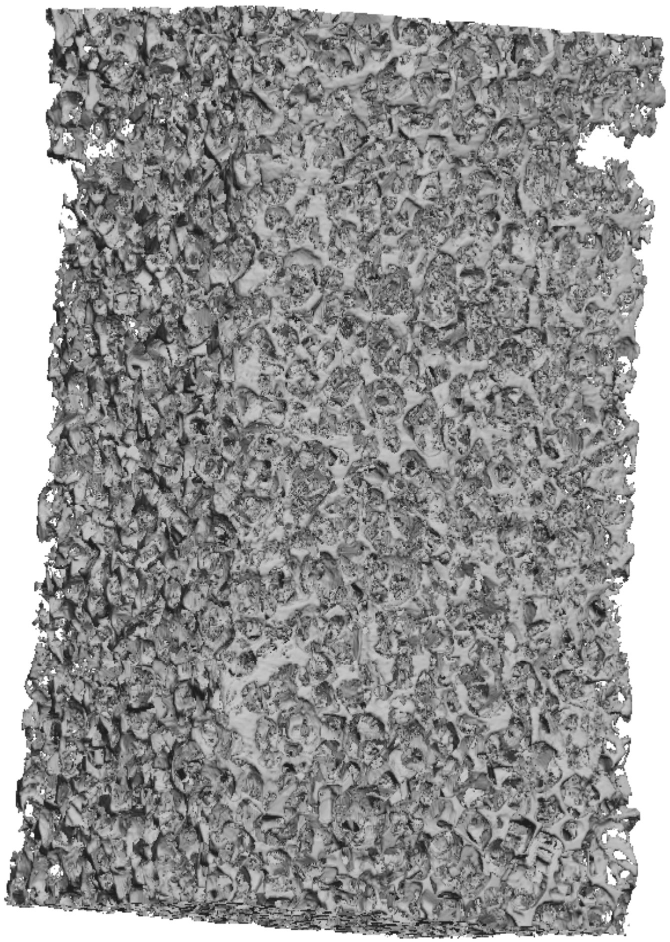


Salt: 400 μm
Vf preform = 75 %
Pinfiltration = 155 bars

Tensile test coupled with X-ray Microtomography

466_4

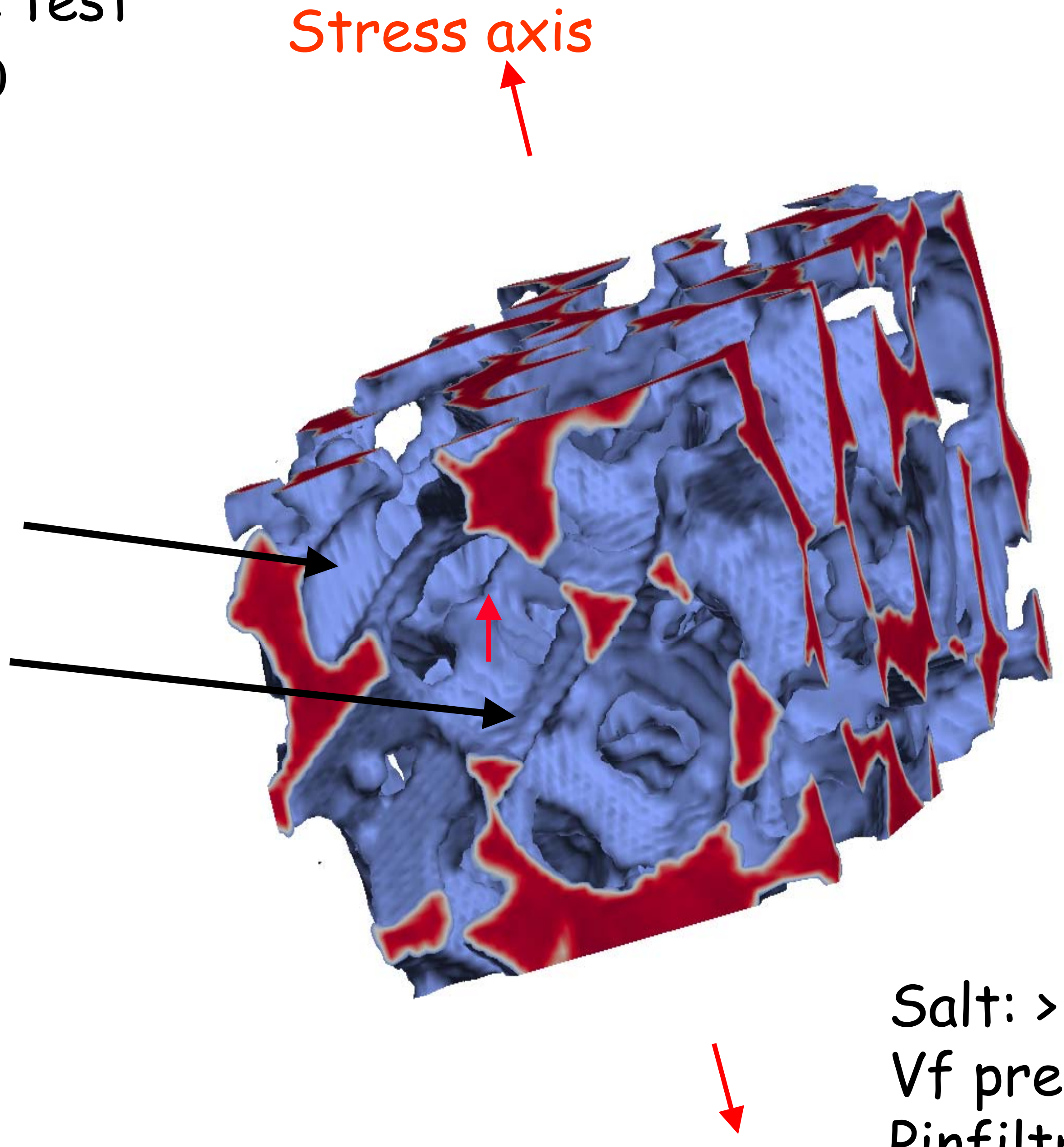
Stress axis (Z)



Salt: 400 μm
Vf preform = 75 %
Pinfiltration = 155 bars

Tensile test

467_0



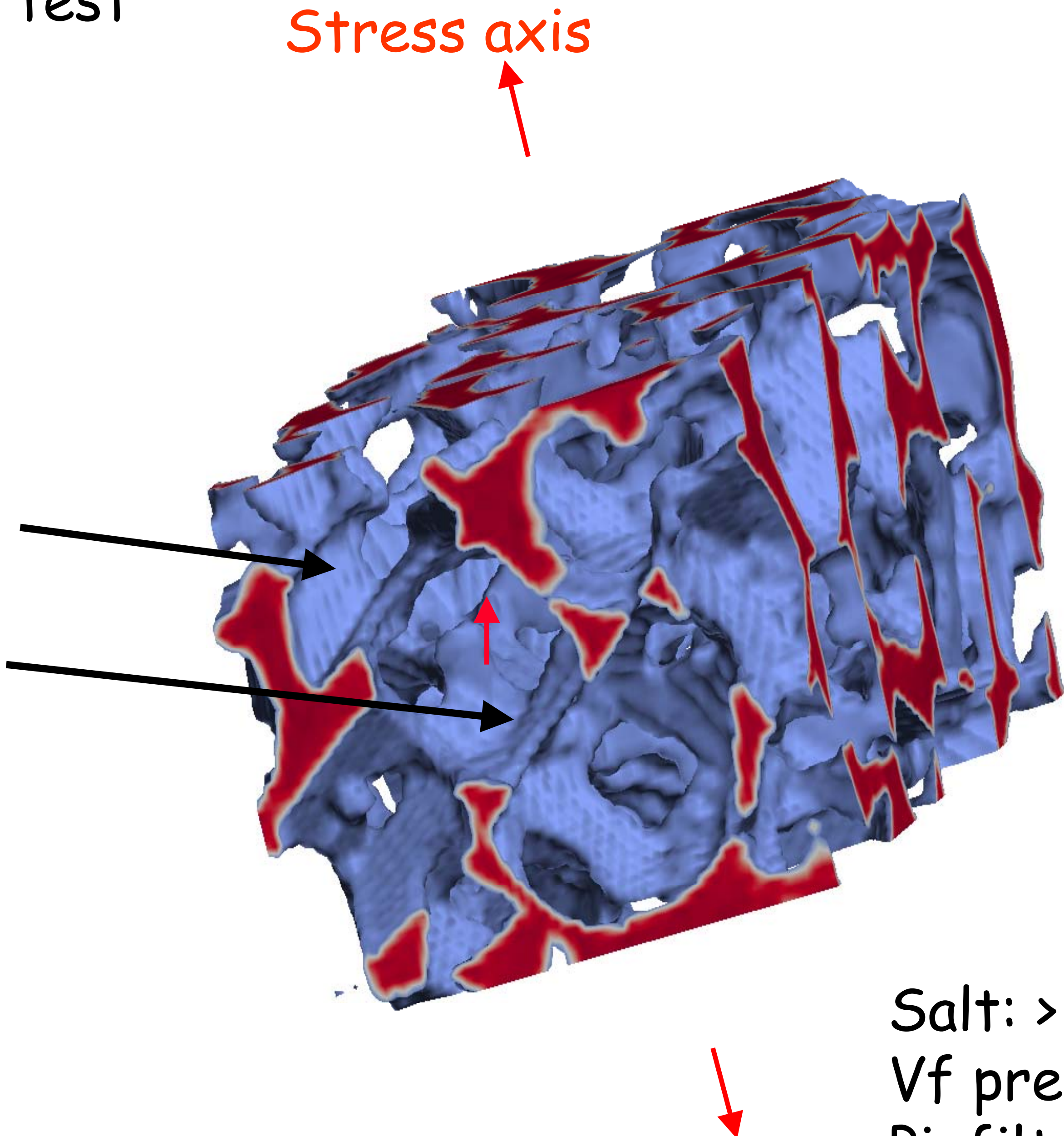
Salt: > 250 µm

Vf preform = 75 %

Pinfiltration = 1 bar

Tensile test

467_1



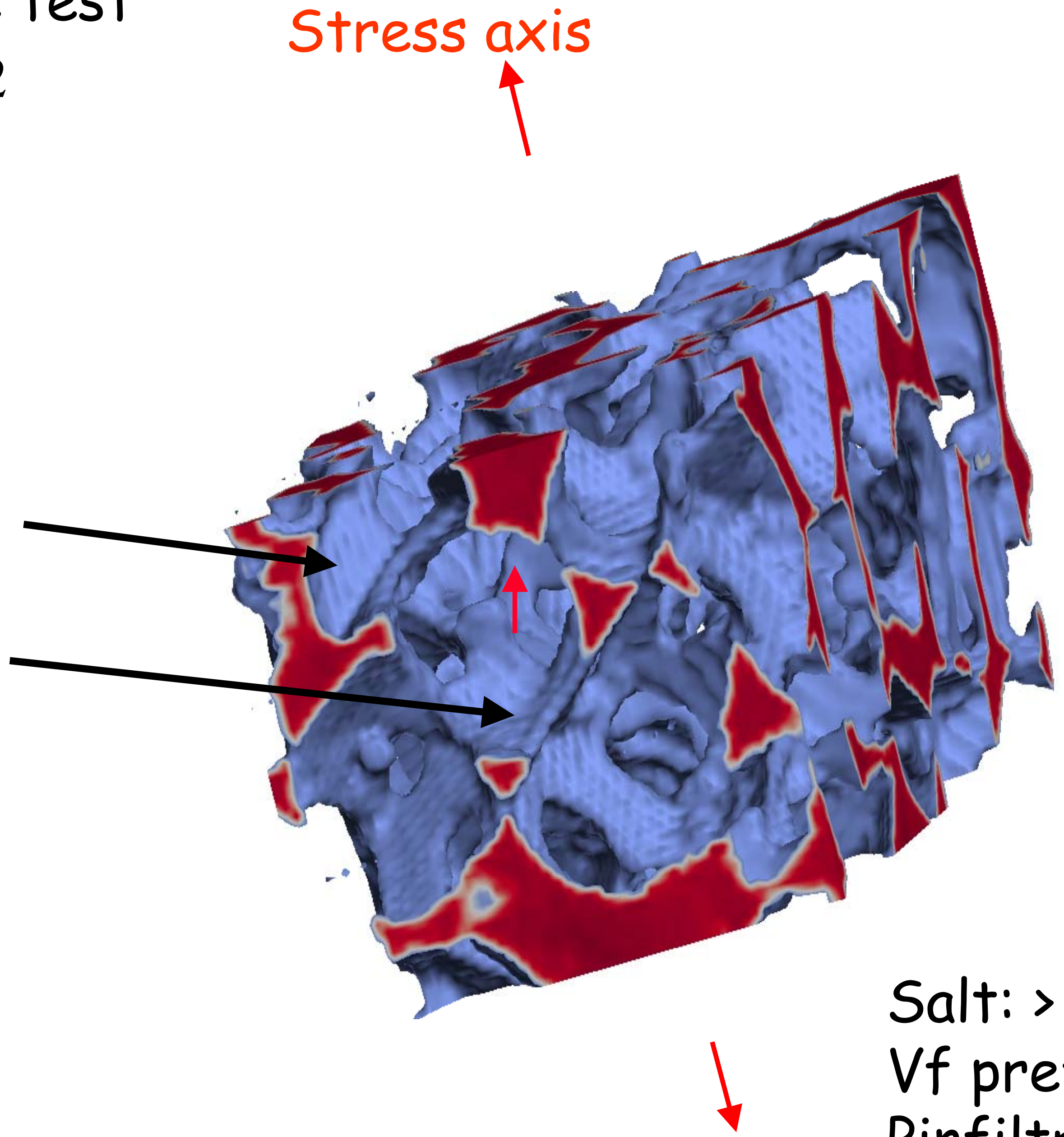
Salt: > 250 μm

Vf preform = 75 %

Pinfiltration = 1 bar

Tensile test

467_2



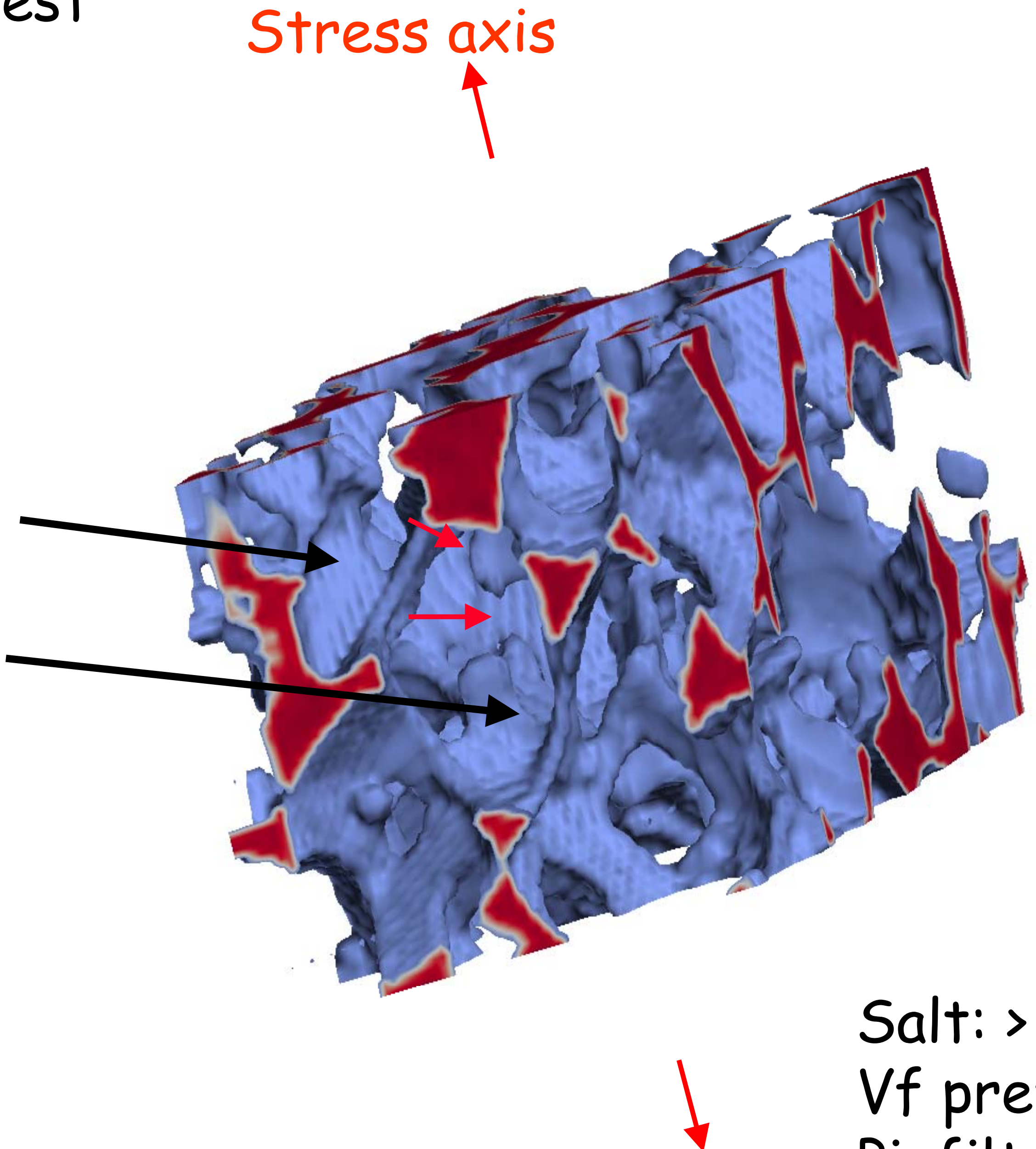
Salt: > 250 μm

Vf preform = 75 %

Pinfiltration = 1 bar

Tensile test

467_3



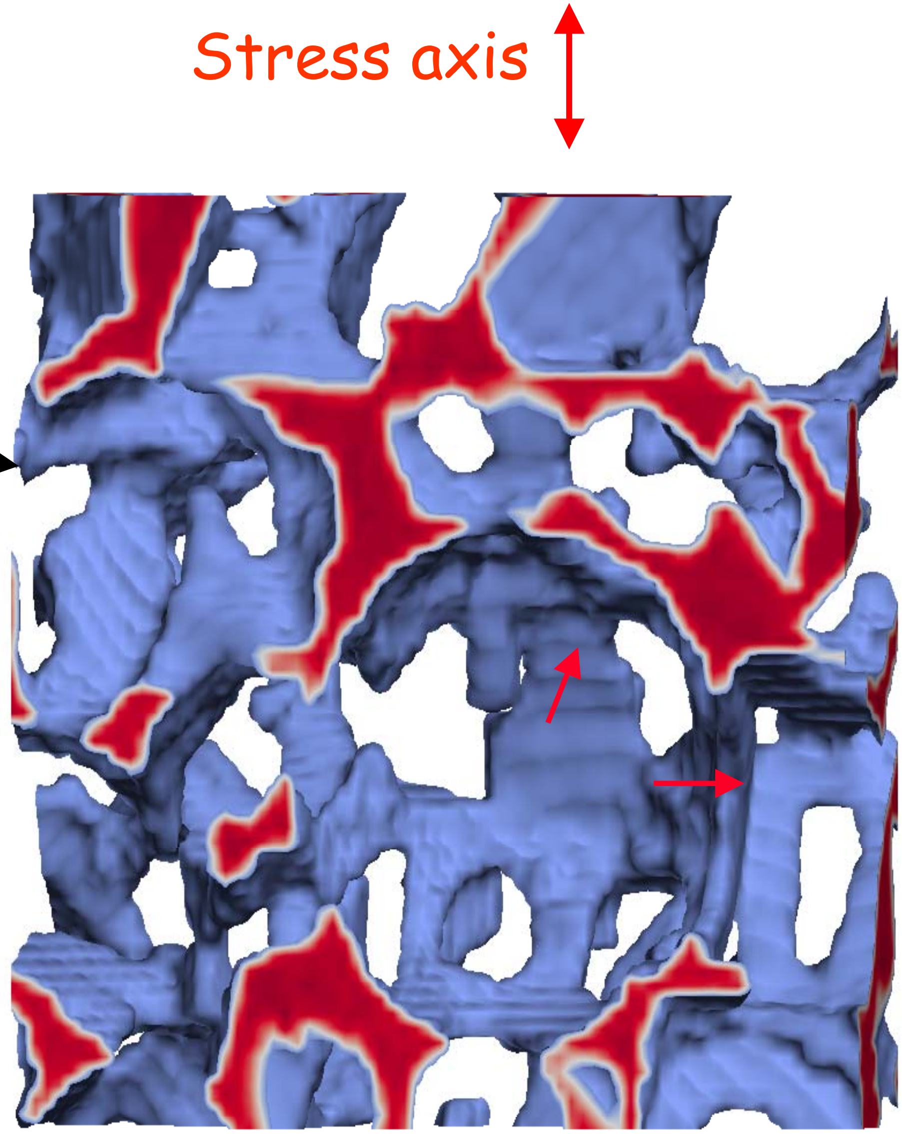
Salt: > 250 μm

Vf preform = 75 %

Pinfiltration = 1 bar

Tensile test

467_0

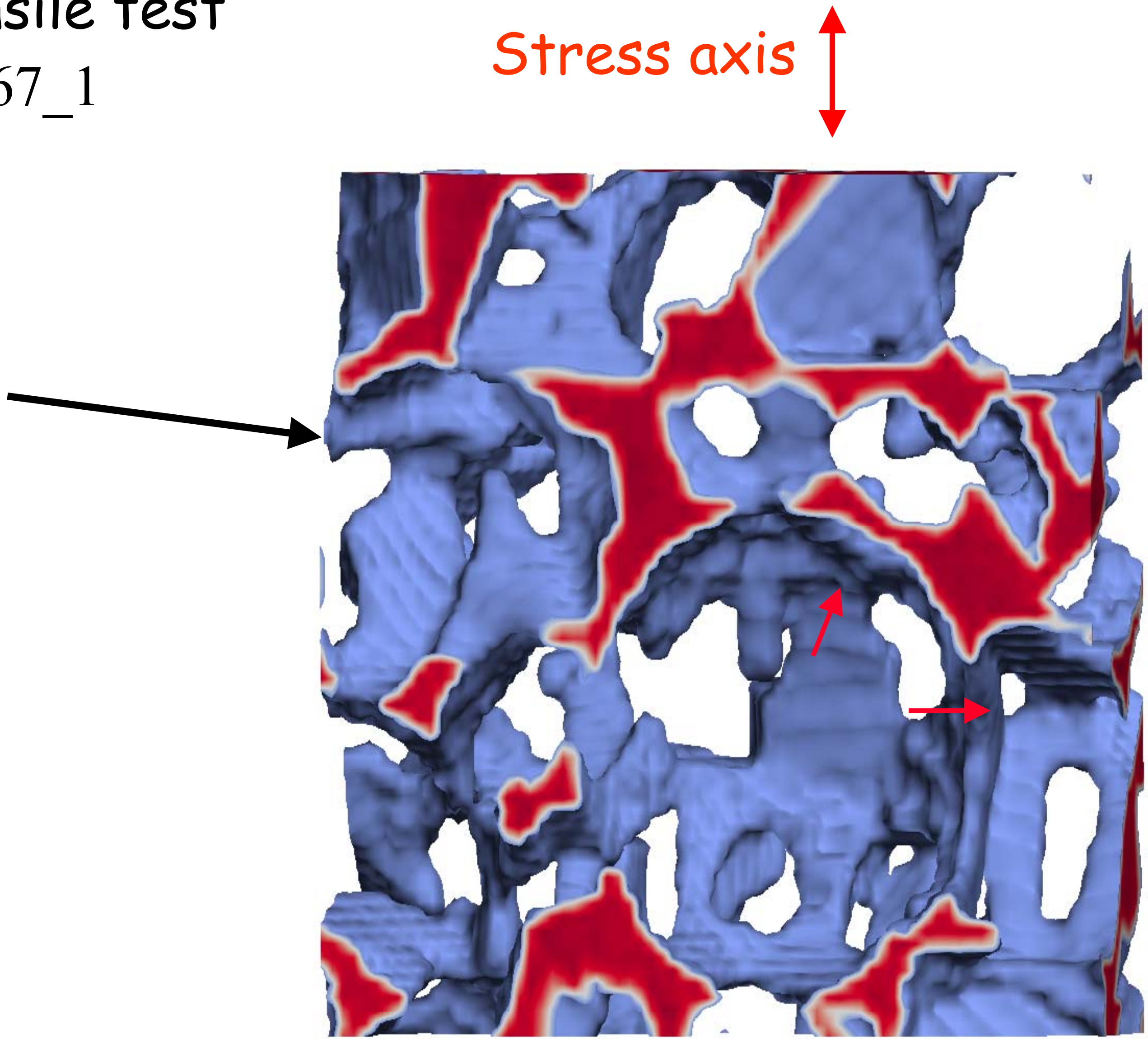


Salt: > 250 µm

Vf preform = 75 %, Pinfiltration = 1 bar

Tensile test

467_1

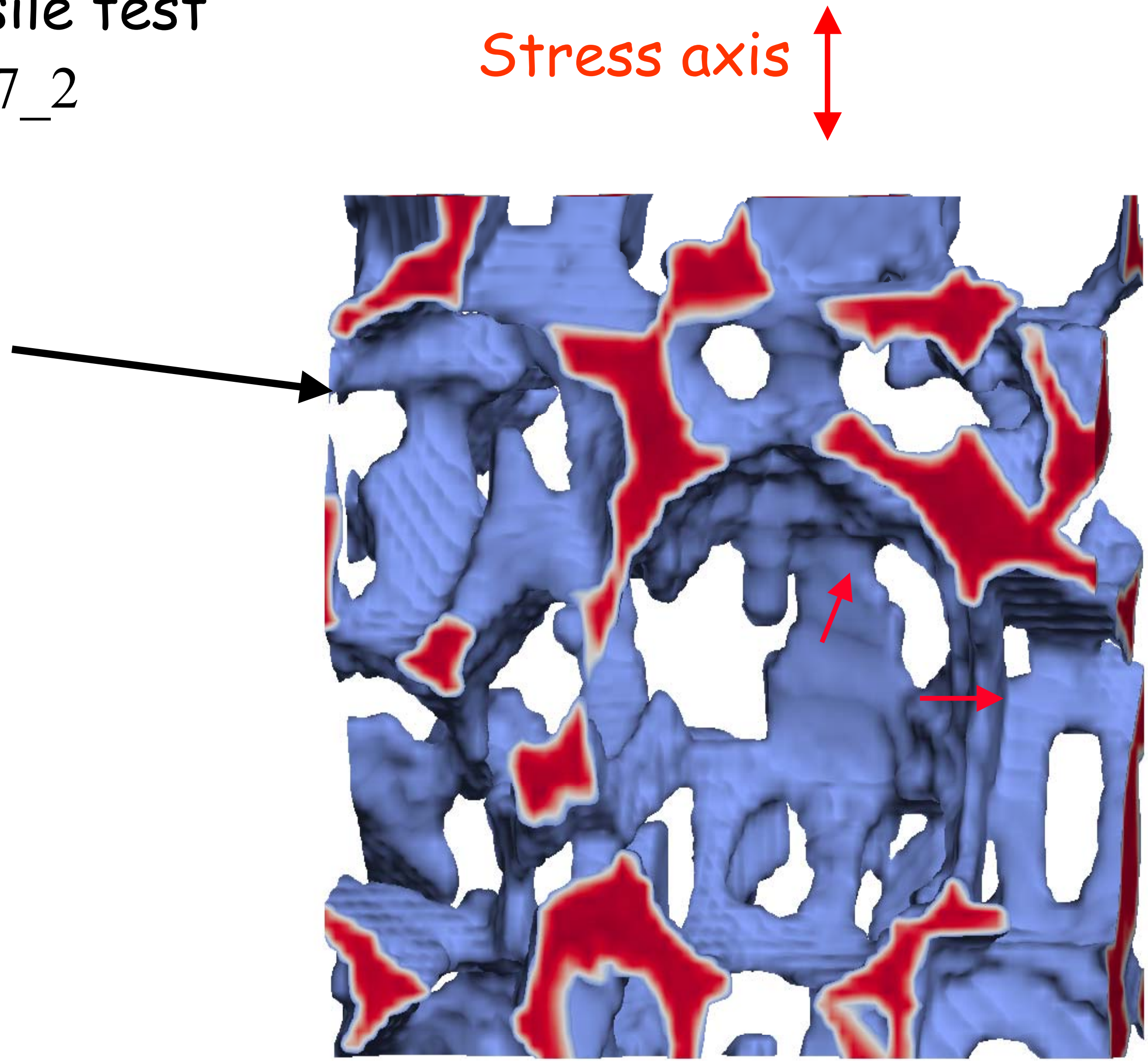


Salt: > 250 µm

Vf preform = 75 %, Pinfiltration = 1 bar

Tensile test

467_2



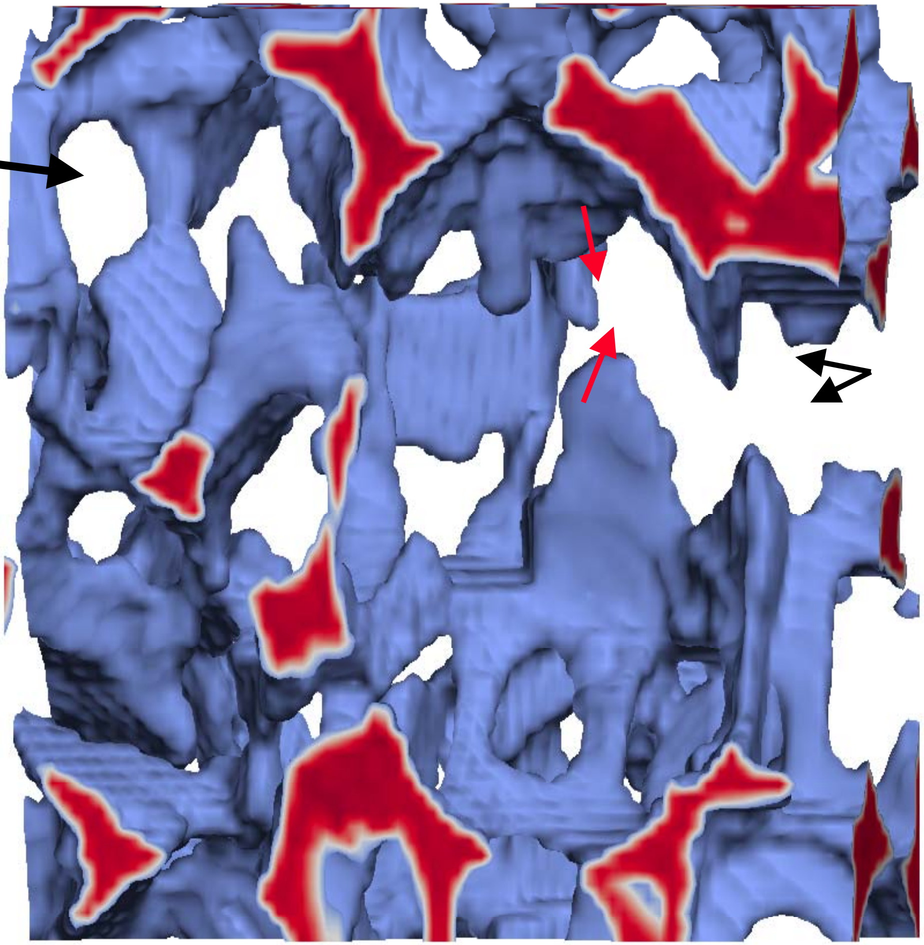
Salt: > 250 µm

Vf preform = 75 %, Pinfiltration = 1 bar

Tensile test

467_3

Stress axis

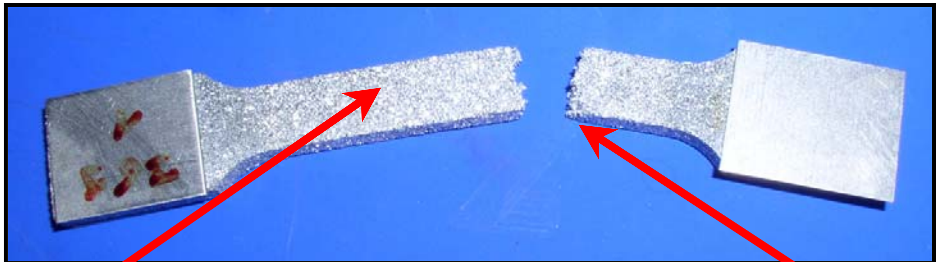


Salt: > 250 μm

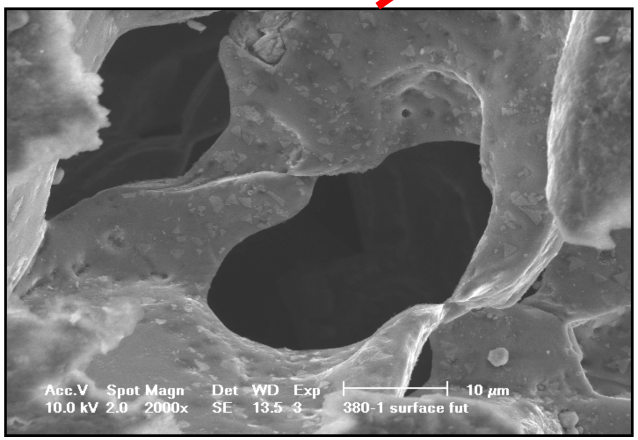
Vf preform = 75 %, Pinfiltration = 1 bar

Damage as seen in the SEM

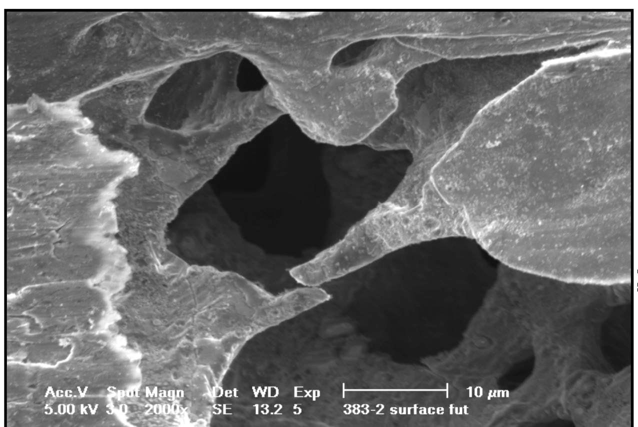
Far from fracture zone



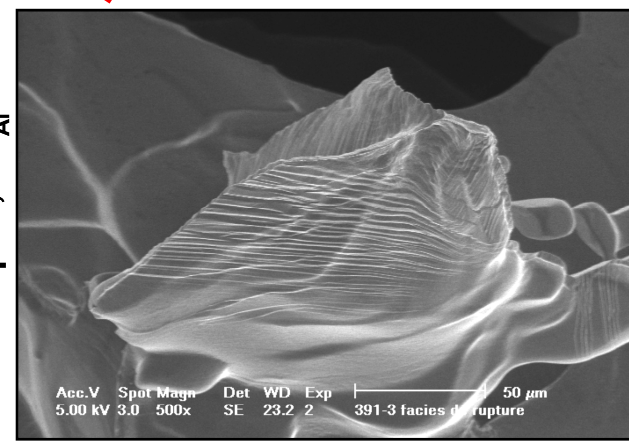
Fracture surface



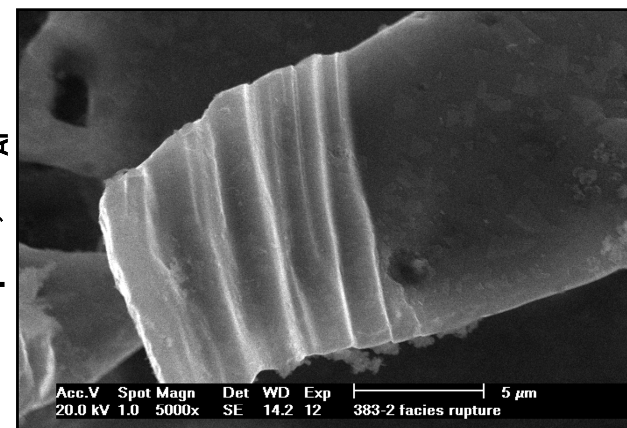
NaCl 75µm , Vf_{Al} =31 %



NaCl 75µm , Vf_{Al} =28 %



NaCl 400µm , Vf_{Al} =25 %



NaCl 75µm , Vf_{Al} =28 %

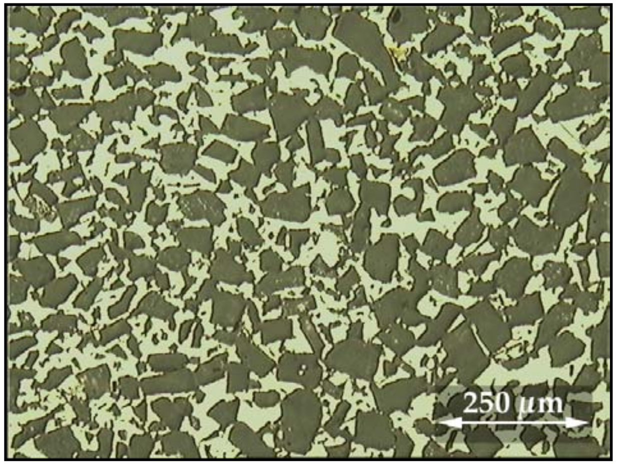
Microstructural tailoring

Microstructural tailoring

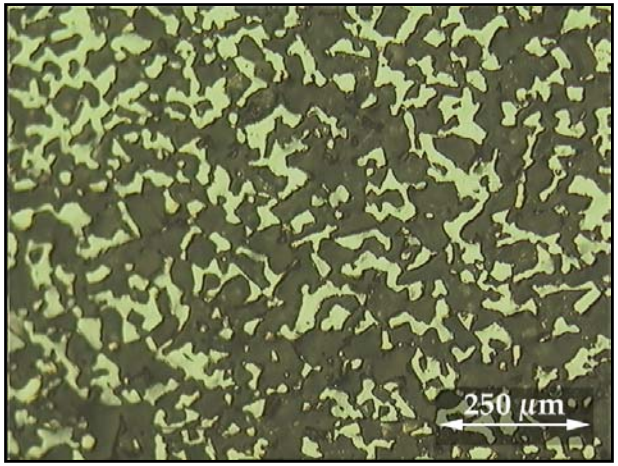
Influence of NaCl Sintering:

T sintering = 755 °C; V_f = 66%; particle size: 63-90 μm

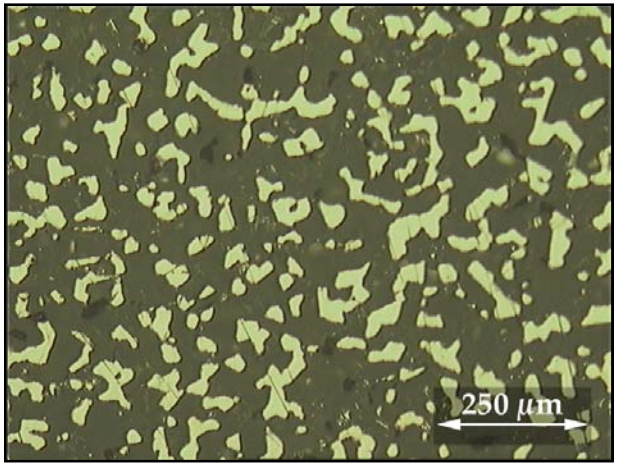
t = 0 [h]



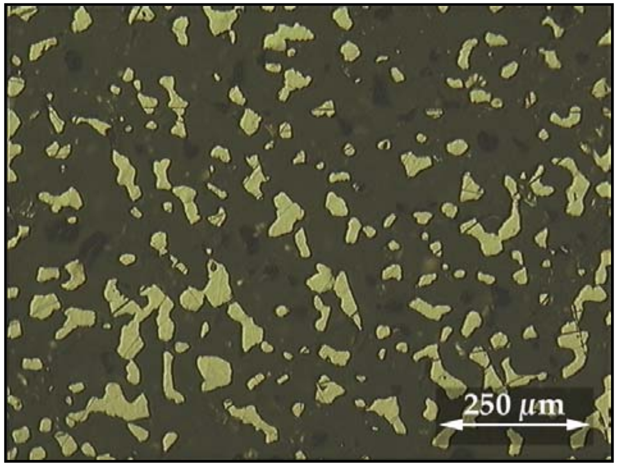
t = 2 [h]



t = 9 [h]

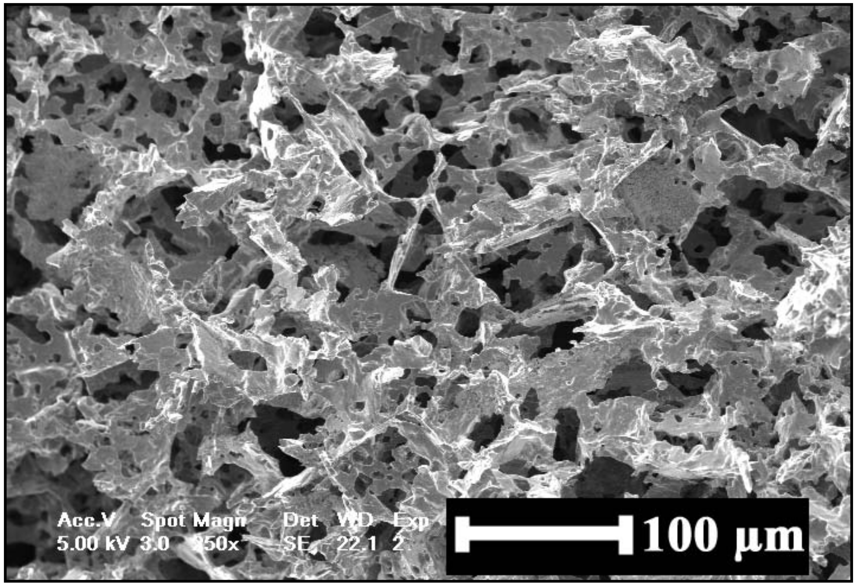


t = 25 [h]

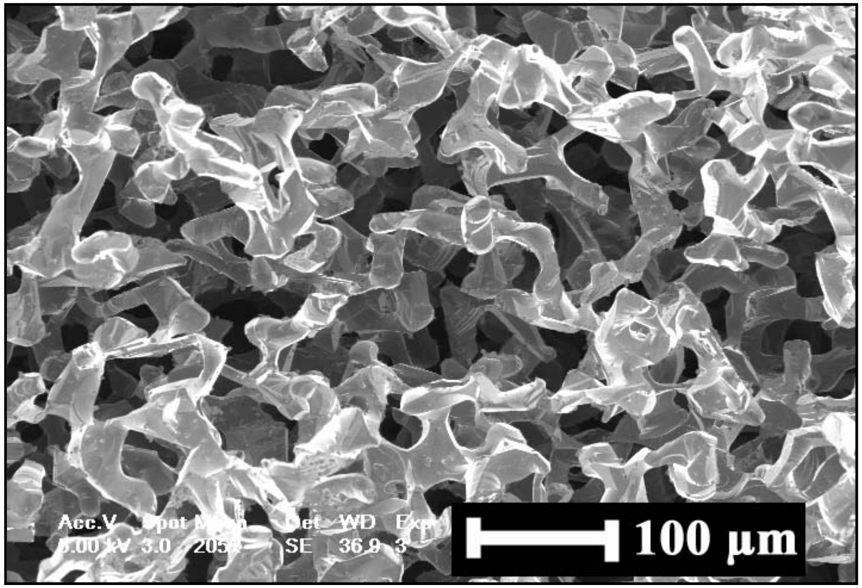


Microstructural tailoring

Influence of NaCl sintering



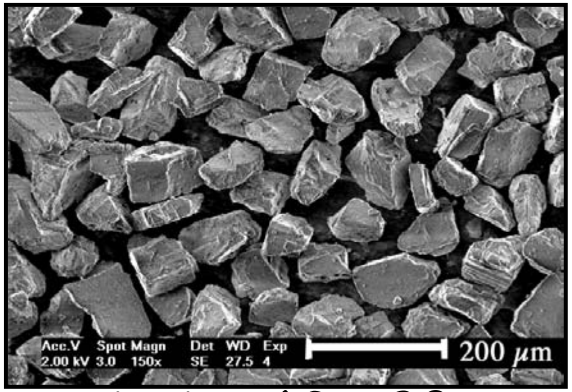
NaCl 63-90 µm,
no sintering
Vf Al = 18 %



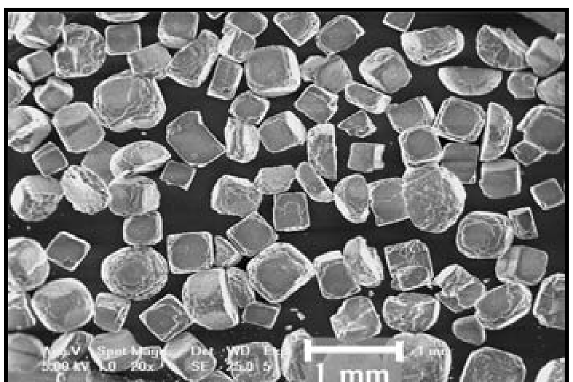
NaCl 63-90 µm,
sintered 24h@750°C
Vf Al = 18 %

Microstructural tailoring

Commercial powders

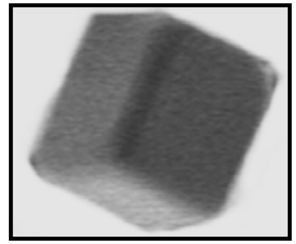


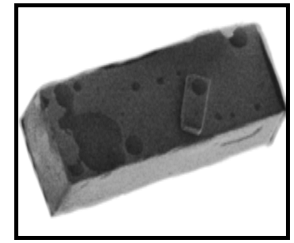
Sieving 63 - 90 μm

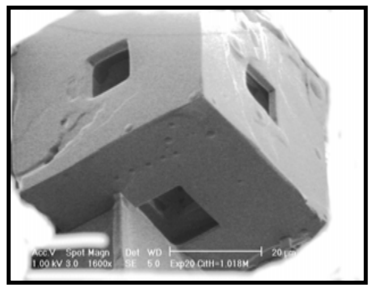


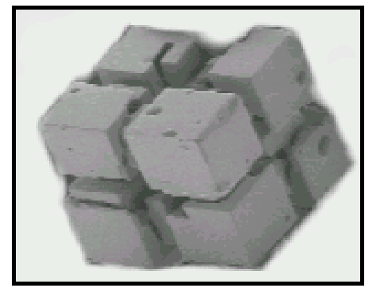
Sieving > 250 μm

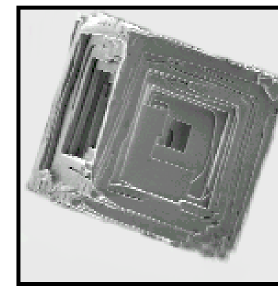
Precipitated powders

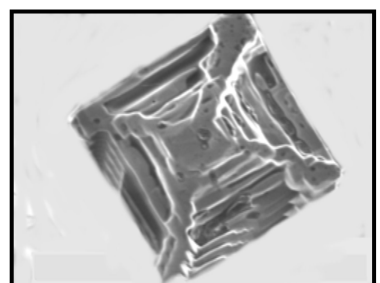


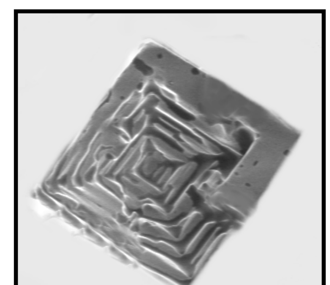








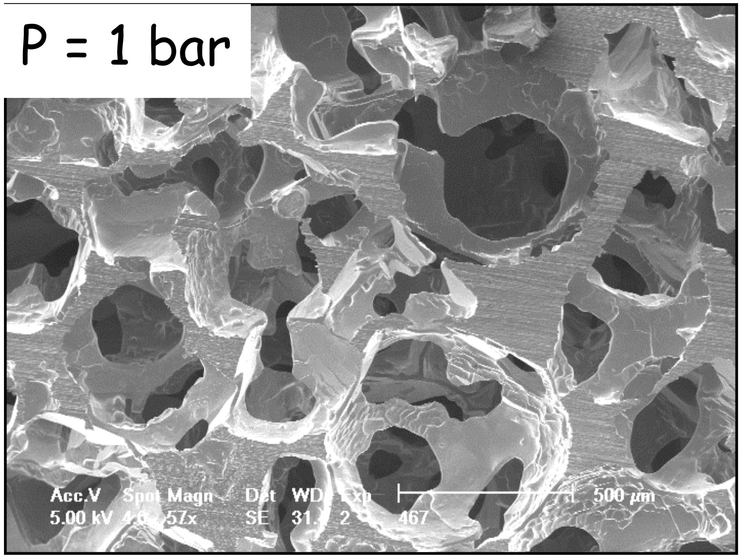


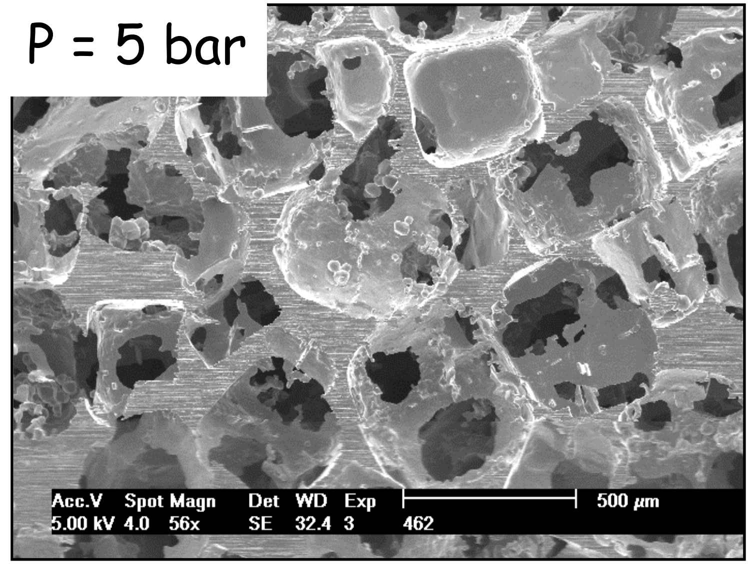


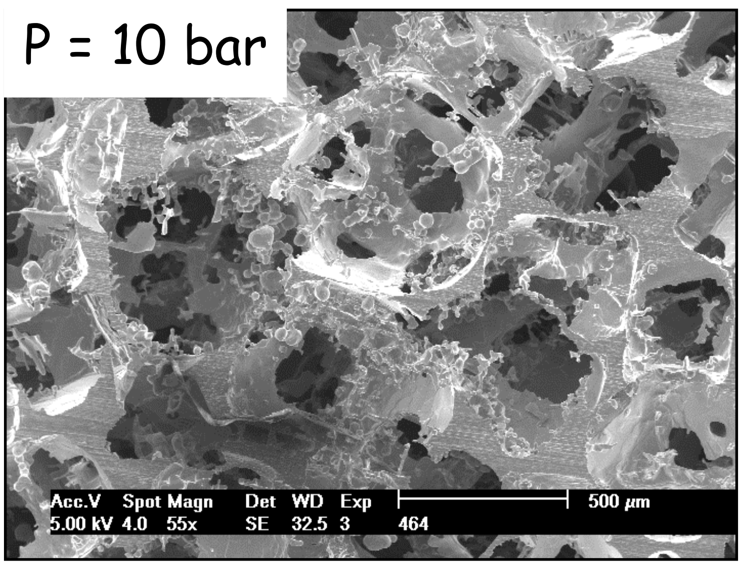
(a few μm in diameter)

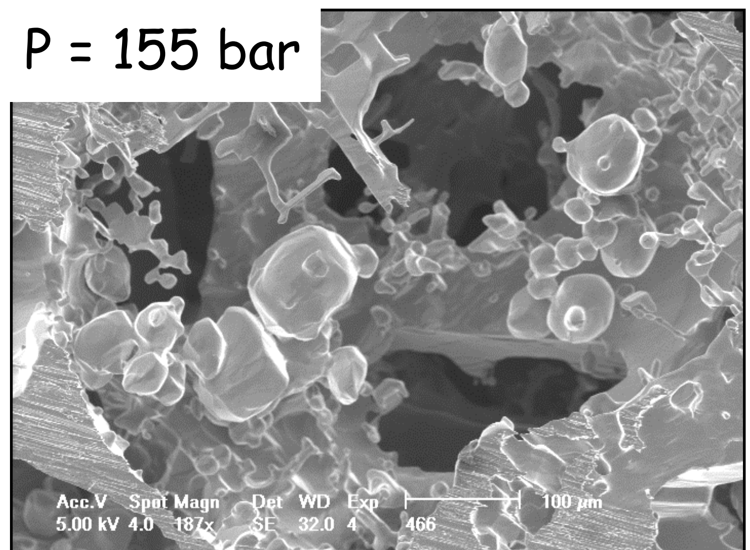
Microstructural tailoring

Influence of Infiltration Pressure (preform 75% dense)









Conclusion

Infiltration: definition, engineering advantages, usefulness in research;

High V_f ceramic particle reinforced metal: can be made relatively tough, strong and ductile.

Open-cell aluminium foams (sponges): exploration of processing/microstructure/property relations for this class of materials.

Acknowledgement

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